

Jhala Zalim Singh

(1730-1823)

The de-facto ruler of Kota, who also dominated
Bundi and Udaipur, shrewd politician,
administrator and reformer.



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Preface

This book was originally a thesis submitted to the University of Rajasthan for the degree of Ph. D. which has been conferred on the author. As a result of further study, the thesis has been amended, and reduced in size by eliminating details which may not be necessary for a general reader or even an average higher student.

Zalim Singh, whose life and achievements form the subject of this book was a fit product of the latter half of the eighteenth century characterised by all round political chaos and anarchy from which Rajasthan heavily suffered and which Zalim Singh wisely exploited to his own and his descendants' advantage. He succeeded in making himself a de facto ruler of Kota where the rulers, during his time, were weak and imbecile and, therefore, had to leave the direction of affairs entirely in his hands. Zalim Singh with his tact saved the state from utter ruin at the hands of the Marathas and Pindaris.

Zalim Singh's daughter was married with unprecedented pomp and show to the then ruler of Bundi, which he tried to dominate like Kota. He fought for the Maharana against Mahadhji Sindhia in the battle of Sipra and was taken prisoner but got himself cleverly ransomed, and resumed his role at Kota. He had close contacts with the Maratha chiefs and diplomats, and the leading British political officers and generals. His power was inherited by his son, and his grandson was recognized as a ruler of an independent principality formed out of the Kota state by the E. I. Company.

He was the most important figure in the Rajasthan of his time.

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November, 1961

Author.

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INTRODUCTORY ESSAY.

Zalim Singh was a product of the eighteenth century of Indian history which was characterized by an all round anarchy and political chaos. He was born in 1739 and shot up to eminence in 1761. The formative period (1739-61) of his life witnessed the rapid downfall of the Mughal empire and the quick expansion and sudden but temporary collapse of the Maratha power. During the sixty-four years of Zalim Singh's career both Delhi and Poona were dominated by domineering usurpers or ministers who were all but de jure rulers.

The beginning of the eighteenth century heralded the growing financial and military weakness of the Mughal empire. Making pathetic efforts to preserve the imperial prestige and keep up appearances while dragging on his ruinous campaign against the Marathas, Aurangzeb died at Ahmadnagar on the 21st February 1707. His successor Bahadur Shah was sixtyfive and ruled for about five years during which he was occupied in suppressing his brother Kambakhsh and in fruitless efforts to put down the rulers of Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur, and the Sikhs. When he died (February 1712) his four sons, Jahan Shah, Azim-us-Shan, Rafi-us-Shan and Jahandar Shah engaged in a fratricidal struggle to seize the crown, and the last, after killing the remaining three in battle, seated himself on the throne. But he ruled only for a little over ten months.

Hardly three months had passed when Farrukhsiyar, son of Azim-us-Shan began to prepare for war against Jahandar Shah and succeeded in seeking support of the two Saiyid brothers of Barha, Husain Ali Khan and Hasan Ali Khan. Husain Ali Khan

was then acting as deputy of Azim-us-Shan in the Suba of Patna and Hasan Ali Khan was the Governor of Allahabad. The two brothers worked heart and soul to assist Farrukhsiyar. Jahandar Shah was defeated and met his death from the hands of Farrukhsiyar.

After the victory the Saiyid brothers were raised to the highest posts of the empire—Saiyyid Abdullah Khan received the title of Kutbul-mulk and Yar-i-Wafadar Zafar Jang, with other favours, and a mansab of 7000 zat and 7000 horse. On Husain Ali was conferred the distinction of Amirul-Umra Firoz Jang with a mansab of 7000 zat and 7000 horse. Thus the Saiyid brothers became most powerful grandees of the empire. Their rivals then began to conspire with the Emperor for their destruction and Husain Ali was sent to the Deccan as Subedar. But so powerful had he become that while leaving Delhi he threatened the Emperor that if in his absence Saiyid Abdullah was not decently treated, he would be back in Delhi in the course of twenty days. The Saiyid brothers began to act like independent chiefs—Abdullah at Delhi and Hussain Ali in the Deccan. Whenever the Emperor tried to interfere, Abdullah sent letters of complaint to Husain Ali, requesting him to return and set things right. The latter also ignored the imperial orders sent to him and acted as though he were an independent ruler of his suba. The Saiyids thought that as it was with their military assistance that Farrukhsiyar had obtained the crown, he should be content with his regal status and let them have all power. The Emperor on the other hand regarded them as only important and loyal servants who, he thought, had been adequately rewarded for the services they had rendered. Thus the differences widened and a crisis developed.

On the earnest request of his brother, Husain Ali marched to Delhi, accompanied by Khandu Daphariya who had nearly sixty thousand Marathas under his command. The Saiyids also invited Maharaja Ajit Singh of Jodhpur and Maharao Bhim Singh

of Kota to help them against the Emperor. Both the Rajput rulers responded to the summons.

The Saiyid brothers gained control of the fort and the Emperor found himself their prisoner. Husain Ali, with regal pomp and display, entered the fort around which his army and that of the Marathas had taken post. The Emperor went into the female apartment. But some Afghans led by a younger brother of Saiyid Abdullah dragged him out, blinded and confined him in a small and narrow room where he was strangled to death.

Having entered the palace, Husain Ali proclaimed by beat of drums the accession of Abul Barakat Rafi-ud-Darjat. This was the end of the imperial prestige and the beginning of the rule of the Saiyid brothers, who became all powerful. But so great was the halo of imperial glamour that neither of the Saiyids dared to seize the throne.

Poor Rafi-ud-Darjat was even less than a figure head, and suffering from consumption. The Saiyids, therefore, took out another of the imprisoned princes, Rafi-ud-Daula, elder brother of Rafi-ud-Darjat and seated him on the throne. Rafi-ud-Darjat remained on the throne for about six months and Rafi-ud-Daula only for a little over three months, and died of mental disorder.

The Saiyid brothers brought out yet another prince Muhammad Akhtar and made him Emperor. He was a young man with good intelligence. His mother also was a lady of much tact and wisdom. The king-makers kept strict control on the young monarch. Naturally Emperor Muhammad Shah and his intelligent mother chafed under this tutelage, but they were helpless. The only other officer who was strong and counted in the empire was Nizam-ul-Mulk, Subedar of Malwa. To him the Emperor and his mother wrote secret letters complaining that the Saiyids wanted to get rid of him so that they might do as they pleased.

The Saiyids knew that the Emperor and Nizam-ul-Mulk were conspiring to overthrow them. Hence they sent a large army under Dilawar Khan to suppress Nizam-ul-Mulk. Dilawar Khan was killed, fighting bravely. Then Alam Ali Khan, nephew of the Saiyids, marched to give battle to Nizam-ul-Mulk but he also was defeated and killed. On hearing this news Husain Ali Khan, accompanied by the Emperor, marched to the Deccan to take revenge of Nizam-ul-Mulk.

While marching against Nizam-ul-Mulk Husain Ali announced that the Emperor was advancing to the Deccan to chastize Nizam-ul-Mulk for his rank insubordination. In fact, it was to safeguard against any possible formation of a conspiracy between the Emperor and his partisans to re-seize authority that the artful Saiyid was taking Muhammad Shah with him. The Emperor was surrounded by all the paraphernalia of regality and Husain Ali treated him with all formal respect, but the smoke-screen was too thin to conceal his motive. The Emperor chafed and fretted under his overbearing behaviour but was unable to do anything effective. His partisans knew it, and, out of sympathy for their lord, wanted a riddance. The imperial camp was surcharged with anger and hatred against Husain Ali, who had surped all power and who was using the helpless Muhammad Shah as his tool.

The Mughals, Iranians and others in the camp who were loyal to the Imperial throne could not fight against Husain Shah and free the Emperor, because the army was under his complete control. The only way they could resort to and which had a chance of success was, therefore, assassination. Encouraged by the prevailing atmosphere, three nobles entered into a conspiracy for the purpose. So strict were they in their secrecy that even the Emperor knew nothing about it. When the royal army was encamped at Tora, seventy miles from Fateh-

pur, Husain Ali Khan, while returning from the imperial inclosure, in a palanquin, was stabbed with a dagger and despatched.

Saiyid Abdullah Khan was greatly distressed by the grievous news of his brother's death, but he promptly put Rafi-us-Shan's son, Sultan Muhammad Ibrahim on the throne, and hastened to prepare for war against Muhammad Shah, who was marching towards Delhi. Abdullah Khan collected a vast horde numbering over a lakh and with Sultan Muhammad Ibrahim advanced to encounter Muhammad Shah. A hard fight ensued, Saiyid Abdullah was taken prisoner. Sultan Muhammad Ibrahim was captured and brought before the Emperor, who pardoned him.

Muhammad Amin Khan (Itimad-ud-Daula) was now made wazir but he died after two months and was succeeded by Nizam ul-Mulk. But he was forced to resign in disgust in 1724. The next Wazir was Qamr-ud-din (Itimad-ud-Daula II) He was a great drunkard, but a harmless old man during whose reign (1724-48) the administration merely drifted along. Thus king and minister alike were more dead than alive. The dry rot at the heart of the Mughal state manifested itself when Peshwa Baji Rao dashed to the very environs of Delhi and created a consternation among its people in 1737. This invited Nadir Shah's invasion in 1739 and the utter collapse of the government of Delhi.

After 1739 the administration of the empire was well-nigh paralysed. Qamr-ud-din Khan was the wazir but he was an indolent man. He considered it wise to keep his post and do as little work as possible. Muhammad Shah did not feel himself strong enough to replace Qamrud-din by any other noble. This deplorable state of affairs at the centre was a great incitement to the provincial chiefs to become independent; and during the life-time of Muhammad Shah the empire disintegrated and was broken into fragments.

Zakaria, the Subedar of the Punjab had begun to behave

like an independent ruler. When he died his two sons began quarrelling for inheriting the Subadarship and one of them invited Ahmad Shah Durrani to invade India. In the Punjab the invader had an easy walk over, and then marched further towards Delhi. Qamr-ud-Din accompanied by the Crown Prince Ahmad Shah advanced against him and a battle was fought at Manupur on the 11th March 1748 in which the wazir was severely wounded. In his dying moments he exhorted his son Mujnul Mulk to continue the fight. The dutiful young man fought with such dash and vigour that the Durrani had to retreat.

By the news of Qamr-ud-Din's death the Emperor was so grievously overwhelmed with sorrow that he expired, and was succeeded by his son Ahmad Shah, a worthless youngman of 22 years brought in the company of mean and unmannerly knaves. He was under the influence of his mother, Udham Bai, a woman of no character, and Javid Khan, her shameless lover.

In 1753 the invader demanded 50 lakhs of rupees and threatened to invade the country again if the amount was not paid. When a council was called they held Safdarjang responsible for the situation and a sort of civil war took place between the Wazir and the partisans of the Emperor who had to summon Maharaja Madho Singh of Jaipur to his aid. Madho Singh succeeded in persuading Safdarjang to withdraw to Oudh. Imad-ul-Mulk was then appointed wazir.

Imad-ul-Mulk deposed Ahmad Shah and installed a grandson of Bahadur Shah on the throne, giving him the name of Alamgir II. Imad expelled the crown prince and became the whole and soul master of the shrunken empire of Delhi. Alamgir was a mere shadow. But his flatterers created a rift between him and Imad which led the latter to put the former treacherously to death. A prince was brought out from the Princes' prison and put on the throne. He was Muiul-Millat, a grandson of

Kambaksh, but nobody cared for him. For the next ten years Imad ruled like a dictator and the crown prince passed his days in Oudh as a pensioner of the East India Company. The Crown Prince, Ali Gauhar, on hearing of his father's tragic death crowned himself king at Allahabad, in 1759 but he could not dare to proceed to Delhi to ascend his father's throne because Imad was too powerful for him. Ali Gauhar had assumed the name of Shah Alam but he was a king without a kingdom. It was with the help of the British and Mahadji Sindhia that he returned to Delhi to sit on his father's throne but only to be blinded and subjected to unspeakable indignities and humiliations by Ghulam Kadir Ruhela.

Such was the condition of the Delhi empire (kingdom) when Zalim Singh as commander of the Kota forces routed a large army of the Jaipur state in November 1761 at Bhatwara near the Tehsil of Mangrol in the Kota State, and thus acquired name in Rajasthan.

On 2nd March when Aurangzeb was laying siege to Satara and the prospects of his success against the Marathas seemed to be very bleak, Raja Ram died of exhaustion at Singhgarh. On receiving this intelligence the Emperor ordered the drums of rejoicing to be beaten, and the soldiers congratulated each other. They thought it would not be difficult to overcome the two young children and widow of the deceased. But the Emperor's hope proved a dupe. Tara Bai showed great power of command. So great were the difficulties created for the Emperor that in traversing the distance of about twenty-eight miles between Khelna and Pandla he took full forty-seven days. Tara Bai sent armies to plunder the six subas of the Deccan as far as Sironj, Mandsor, and the suba of Malwa. The districts were put under Subadars, Kamaishdars (revenue collectors) and Rahdars (toll collectors).

On the advice of Zulfiqar Khan Shahu was released and allowed to proceed to his homeland by Emperor Bahadur Shah (1707-1712) It was believed that Shahu's arrival in Maharashtra would be a signal for civil war between him and his aunt Tara Bai. The civil war did take place, but Tara Bai, was defeated and Shahu crowned himself king at Satara on the 12th January 1708. and in 1715 Balaji Vishwanath was appointed Peshwa.

To keep Saiyid Hussain Ali at a safe distance Emperor Farrukhsiyar appointed him Subedar of the Deccan where he became friendly with Balaji Rao and when Abdullah Khan called him to Delhi to curb the Emperor he marched to help him accompanied by Balaji Rao at the head of about 16000 Marathas. But before he started he had secured from Husain Ali the right of collecting chauth and sardeshmukhi from the six mughal subas of the deccan.

The Saiyid brothers succeeded in dethroning, imprisoning and despatching Emperor Farrukhsiyar and putting on the throne a prince of their own choice, who on the advice of Ajitsingh of Jodhpur and Jai Singh of Amber signed the agreement which Saiyid Husain Ali had made with Balaji Rao and according to which the Marathas were conceded the right of chauth and sardeshmukhi from the Deccan

On return to Satara Balaji Rao was accorded a grand reception by Shahu in a durbar held specifically for the purpose. It further heightened the prestige and power of Balaji Rao in the Maratha world. But he did not live long to enjoy the position he had acquired. He died at Sarwad on the 2nd April - 1720, and was succeeded by Baji Rao.

In 1733 Sawai Jai Singh of Jaipur expelled Budha Singh the ruler of Bundi, and installed his own nominee on the throne. The

Rani of Bundi sent an envoy to Shahu to purchase military aid against Sawai Jai Singh. Shahu, in return for 6 lakhs of rupees ordered Sindhia and Holkar to march to Bundi and reinstall Budha Singh. The Marathas expelled the Jaipur army of occupation. But it was a short-lived triumph. Sawai Jaisingh sent a strong force who re-seized Bundi and restored the nominee to his position. But the Maratha incursion made the Rajputs realize that the Marathas were a great danger to them. They counselled together and made plans to turn out the Marathas not only from Rajasthan but from Malwa as well. They offered help to Emperor Muhammad Shah who despatched a large army under Khandauran with whom the Rajput Rajas including Sawai Jaisingh co-operated but when the vast horde reached the south of Mukandara it was besieged by the Marathas and the grand effort ended in a debacle for the allies. Khan-i-Dauran had to agree to pay forty lakhs to the Marathas

Early in 1736 Baji Rao came to Rajasthan. He wanted to persuade or pressurise the Rajput rulers to transfer their alliance to the Marathas and pay them tribute. The Maharaja of Udaipur extended him a right royal reception and Baji Rao also treated him with great honour. It was agreed that Udaipur would pay one lakh and a half as annual tribute. On the 4th March there was a ceremonious meeting of Baji Rao and Sawai Jai Singh at Bambhola near Kishangarh. Sawai Jai Singh had advised the Emperor to meet Baji Rao at Delhi and settle the issues outstanding between both, because the Kachhwa prince by his personal experience had now known that the power of the Marathas had grown too great to be physically resisted. The Emperor instead of inviting the Peshwa for an interview sent his representative with certain proposals which Baji Rao rejected forthwith, and sent his counter-proposals which so much angered the Emperor that he did not care to send any reply. Baji Rao returned home and began preparations for an expedition against Delhi.

In the beginning of 1737 Baji Rao launched a hurricane campaign against Muhammad Shah's empire. By long and rapid marches, Baji Rao reached the outskirts of Delhi on the 28 th March and plundered the people who had come out to attend the Ramnavami fair, but he did not risk entering the city which was too strongly defended for a sudden dash. But the raid created a panic in the capital.

The Emperor summoned Nizam-ul-Mulk to the capital to drive away the Marathas from the north. While the Nizam was encamped at Bhopal, Baji Rao besieged the city and stopped all supplies which forced Nizam-ul-Mulk to come out, and sign treaty according to which the Nizam promised to obtain for the Marathas an imperial firman for Malwa, to cede to them the territory between the Narbada and Jamuna and pay fifty lakhs of rupees as war indemnity.

On 28 th March 1740 Peshwa Baji Rao breathed his last, and his son Balaji Baji Rao succeeded him as Peshwa. He was keen to obtain an imperial rescript conferring on him the Suba of Malwa. Balaji Baji Rao proceeded to Dholhur and held consultation with Sawai Jai Singh about it. Following Jai Singh's advice Muhammad Shah issued a farman dated 4th July 1741 bestowing the Deputy eputy Governorship of Malwa on the Peshwa. This was only a face saving device to disguise the imperial surrender. Malwa now ceased to be a part of the empire.

It was in 1742 that the Marathas first entered Bengal under Raghuji Bhonsle and completely encircled the camp of its Governor, Nawab Alivardi Khan, who with great difficulty fought his way out. They plundered Murshidabad and occupied the country from Rajmahal to Madinipur. Then Hughli passed into Maratha possession and all over the country they committed wanton destruction and unspeakable outrage. In 1743 Raghuji

again made an invasion and repeated the misery of the previous year's raid. The Third invasion took place in March 1744 with brutal ferocity. The fourth invasion was led again by Raghuji Bhonsle, who captured Orissa and entered Bihar. The Emperor made peace with the Marathas and promised to pay to Raja Shahu 25 lakhs of rupees as the chauth of Bengal and ten lakhs as that of Bihar. Still Raghuji did not desist from raiding Orissa. Ultimately it was in 1751 that a treaty was signed between Nawab Alivardi Khan and Raghuji according to which the former agreed to pay to the latter a sum of twelve lakhs of rupees annually as chauth for Bengal, Bihar and Orissa.

The deplorable conditions in Delhi invited the Marathas to invade and plunder northern India. Raghunath Rao marched into Rajasthan with a large army (1753) and exacted promises of tribute from Kota, Bundi, Jaipur and other places, and then attacked Dig and Kumbher of the Jat Raja. Having made peace with him, he moved on to Mathura, then surprised the Emperor's camp. Taking advantage of his presence and support Imad-ul-Mulk seized the wazirship, promising to Raghunath Rao 25 lakhs of rupees as the customary present for such a high office. But Peshwa's instructions to his brother were to squeeze as much money as possible. Hence after much discussion the dues were fixed at 82 lakhs which was impossible for Imad to pay. Anyhow nine lakhs were collected and paid to the Marathas and banker's bill for 17½ lakhs were given.

In October 1759 a Durrani army crossed Indus and made rapid and unopposed advance. The entire province was abandoned to the Afghans and lost to the Marathas (December 1759). An engagement took place between Abdali and Dattaji at Bararighat in which the latter was killed, while crossing a sandy nala, by an Afghan's bullet. Abdali's general Jahan Khan routed Malhar Holkar near Sikandrabad. Meanwhile reports came that a large Maratha army was marching up to re seize the Punjab and rebuild Maratha supremacy in the north.

Khe Maratha grand army left Sindhkhot on the 25th March under the supreme command of Sadashiva Bhau, the son of Baji Rao's younger brother. Peshwa's son Vishwas Rao, a boy of seventeen was sent with the army as its nominal commander-in-chief. Bhau was to act as his guardian. They arrived at Gwalior on the 30th May, sent a detachment to seize Delhi, which laid a regular siege to the fort. Then Bhau arrived, and the Delhi fort passed into Maratha possession on the 3rd August 1760. Its immediate effect was to restore the prestige of the Marathas, which had been damaged by the death of Dattaji and rout of Malhar. Abdali wanted to return to his own country if an honourable peace could be made with the Marathas. But the surrender of Delhi had blinded Bhau to the realities of the situation.

The Delhi palace passed into the Marathas hands, but what Bhau got was the ceiling of the Diwani-Khan which was coined into nine lakhs of Rupees. But this sum maintained his army for a month only, and famine began to stare in his face.

Then Bhau started for Kurukshetra and on his way he learnt that Abdali had cut off his communication with Delhi and the south. On 29th October Bhau reached Panipat. On 1st November the Afghan army was sighted seven miles south of his position. Abdali crossed the Jamuna and on 1st November arrived five miles nearer to Panipat. Abdali's fighting force consisted of two equal halves of about 40,000 men each, one half was Durrani and the other half was Indian. The Marathas numbered about 45000. Bhau's line of communication had been cut off. No supply could reach his camp. Hence a famished army on lean and half dead country mares met the finest cavalry in Asia. The battle took place on the 14th January 1761. Sadashiva Bhau and Vishwanath were killed. Mahadji Sindhia was

lamed for life. It was a nationwide disaster. There was not a home in Maharashtra that had not to mourn the loss of a member.

On the 24th January when the Peshwa, while encamping at Bhilsa heard the fatal news of Panipat which unhinged his mind. He returned to Poona where he died on 23rd June 1761.

Delhi was without even a shadow of an emperor from 1760 to 1772. On 10th October 1760 Sadashiva Rao Bhau had deposed the Wazir's puppet Shah Alam II (Muin-ul-Millat) and proclaimed Shah Alam (Prince Ali Gauhar, son of Alamgir II) as emperor. But this Shah Alam remained under British protection at Allaha-bad till 1772 when with the help of Sindhia he returned to his father's capital.

A fortnight after Panipat Abdali came to Delhi to make administrative arrangements so that he could keep the Punjab to himself and get an annual tribute of 40 lakhs of rupees for the rest of the empire. His instructions were that Shah Alam should be recognized as Emperor and Imad reappointed wazir and Najib Mir Bakshi and the two should work in co-operation with each-other. But Najib did not make up with Imad, and himself became the head of the army (Mir Bakshi), Governor (faujdar) of the capital and regent (mukhtar) of the imperial administration.

Abdali had stayed in Delhi for six weeks when his troops began to clamour for their pay and he had to leave Delhi on the 20th March. His retreating troops plundered Delhi for three days.

Surajmal, the Jat Raja of Bharatpur was now the most powerful prince in India. He had a strong army and an overflowing treasury. On the 12th June he captured the fort of Agra, did not help Imad in reseizing wazir ship from Najib, who became the defacto ruler of Delhi for the next ten years.

The East India Company was yet far away from Rajasthan. Plassey had given them a foothold in Bengal with the financial resources of which they fought wars in the south. The fall of Pandichery eliminated from the political arena of India a very powerful European rival of the British. The battle of Buxar made Shah Alam their pensioner and the Nawab Wazir of Oudh their feudatory. But it was towards the close of the eighteenth century that Zalim Singh came in contact with his future masters. For about forty years he had to deal with the Marathas, chiefly Sindhia and Holkar.

SOURCES OF THE WORKS

Three Categories

The sources of the history and account of Zalim Singh Jhala or more properly Mamaji Raj, and later Nanaji Raj Rajrana Faujdar Zalim Singhji Jhala can be divided into three categories :—

1. Contemporary source material.
2. Contemporary published works.
3. Later works, published and unpublished.

Contemporary Source Material

This can be further divided into two classes—

1. State documents and 2. Inscriptions. Strictly speaking the state documents should be classed as those belonging to, and forming part of the Archives of the Kota state and those preserved in the Gulgule Daftar, which though situated at the City of Kota, is really a Maratha Daftar, rather a part of the Sindhia's Daftar. There are a few letters in the possession of the National Archives of India relating to Zalim Singh's relations with the East India Company from 1805 onwards. Their copies are preserved in the Bakhshikhana of Kota. Similarly the Kota State Archives have all the original letters received from the Maratha courts and copies of those sent to them. The Kota state Archives are, therefore, the main and the most reliable source for the history of Zalim Singh.

1. State Documents, (a) The Kota State Archives

These start from 1634 (s. 1691) and come upto 1947 when the state integrated into former Rajasthan but those

pertaining to Zalim Singh directly or indirectly begin from 1756 (s. 1813). Later they become more and more numerous and detailed, and from 1775 onwards it is Zalim Singh who figures in almost every state paper. The Archives are mainly in four forms.

(i) *Do Varkis*:—These are two-leaf documents arranged and collected either chronologically or regionally or subject-wise. They are miscellaneous documents dealing with a variety of topics and are all correctly dated. They relate to day-to-day administration and constitute, therefore, most reliable source of information for Zalim Singh's biography.

(ii) *Jamaband*:—They are revenue accounts and comprise mostly monthly or six monthly accounts of revenue, customs, forests etc. They also contain accounts of the various taxes old and new. The accounts were kept in a very thorough manner. Every entry gives all necessary details, for instance,

Rs. — as.

18' — 2 Kalali (Excise) Receipts from Pargana-Bhattis (distilleries) as detailed below.

7—0 Kalamanda Kalal Goru—Six monthly instalments.

3—0 Amapura Kalal Madho—Three monthly instalments.

5—0 Aklera—Natbia—Six monthly instalments.

3—2 Mandala—Birdhia—Three monthly instalments.

(iii) *Mulki Jhadas*:—They are in form of "Bahis" or "anris" and contain consolidated accounts of one, three, five or ten years, and are a very useful source of information. They give details of receipts under various heads with names of parganas, villages, collectors, the collecting fee allowed to them, the quantity collected in kind and then converted into cash, the agency through which the conversion was done, with

names of hawalgirs etc. On the expenditure side they show the various heads of expenditure, namely army movements, the places of camps, disbursement of salaries, rewards, appreciations, casualty allowances, purchases of horses, camels and war materials like gun powder, cannon balls, jute, cotton, rations and tentage; tributes paid, the currency in which they were paid; the batta charged and the place at which they were paid; missions, deputations, harkaras and spies and detailing their names and the missions with which they were charged; receptions and hospitalities, tours of Zalim Singh and the Maharao; conquest and occupation of foreign territories; marriages; deaths; births etc. and constructions of buildings, tanks, temples, roads, wells etc.

(iv) *Taliks*:—They contain copies of orders and letters despatched to pargana officers or to chiefs and sardars outside the state and also copies of letters received from the hawalgirs and other officers, as also from outside the state. Even the correspondence of highly diplomatic character is copied in the taliks and in such case the names of the copyists, the authority by whose order the copy was done, the officer to whom the original correspondence was entrusted and the place where the originals are preserved is mentioned. The taliks are, therefore, the most important source of information not, only regarding the life and achievements of Zalim Sing but also with regard to the various aspects of administration of the Kota state since its inception. All the taliks are unfortunately not available. There are long and regrettable gaps but from 1790 onwards good many taliks are available which highlight the various activities of Zalim Singh—administrative, political and diplomatic.

There are several other categories of the state Archives, too many to mention, but the main categories are the above four. The most important of the remaining miscellaneous papers are the news-letters addressed to Zalim Sing, Madho Singh or Dalel Khan by the harkaras, attached to the various courts of Rajputana states and the Maratha states. Those attached to the

latter lived in and accompanied the camps of Sendhia, Holker, Jean Bepiste, Dudernaiec, Bapuji Sendhia. Mir Khan Pindari, Karim Khan Pindari and Chitu Pindari etc. These letters contain very interesting details of daily events and occurrences at the various courts and camps. They do not particularly relate to the life of Zalim Singh but indicate the tendency and attitude of his mind and the alertness and watchfulness which generally characterized his diplomacy and administrative policy. But when Zalim Singh himself was in a Maratha camp for certain political negotiations or consultations, the harkaras sent the news of his activities in minutest details to Modho Singh, who carried on the administration of the state in the absence of his father; and when even Madho Singh was absent from Kota, attending some Martha camp, the letters were addressed to Khanji Dalel Khan detailing activities of Zalim Singh and Madho Singh from their respective camps. Even when Zalim Singh toured the Kota state news of daily events in his camp were sent to Kota. These letters give description of such activities as were public or known at least to a certain circle in the camp, and sometimes they communicate also political news or gist of conversations held on various occasions, but mostly the harkaras had no access to confidential talks and particularly Zalim Singh's talks were so secret that the harkaras could not have and were not permitted to have any scent of it. These news letters, though interesting and helpful in understanding the history of Rajputana and Central India during that period, are not, however, very reliable. They mostly flatter Zalim Singh and tell him what he most relished, though sometimes, which is very rare, they communicate to him the views of certain chiefs which were contradictory to his.

State Documents, (b) Archives of Gawalior & Indore State

There are a few letters which Zalim Singh addressed to Ahalyabai Holkar and her general Tukoji Holkar, preserved in the foreign and political section of Indore State office but they are not of much consequence. In the Archives of the Gwalior State

hardly any paper is traceable regarding Zalim Singh. But the most important collection is the Daftar of scindhia's vakil posted at Kota, known to the historians as Gulgule's Daftar, because the vakil's surname was Gulgule. This in fact can be regarded as a part of the Gwalior state Archives but the collection is in possession of the descendants of the vakil and is situated at Kota and should, therefore be treated as a separate office.

Gulgule Daftar

In the thirties of the eighteenth century the ruler of the Kota state entered into a political alliance with Peshwa Bajirao I, who assigned the state to the Scindhia and the Holkar as their joint jagir. The Daftar dates from the 26th December 1733 when Ranoji Scindhia addressed a letter to the kamavisdar of Rajgarh. The last document is dated 1857. There are fifty three bundles of letters which number about four thousand and five hundred, some of which are undated. Of these about one thousand have been published by Sardar Anand Rao Phalke but this touches only the fringe of the collection. The rest of the documents have been examined, classified and noted on by Doctor G.S. Desai but the present descendant of the Gulgule family has not yet permitted their publication. It is feared that if the Daftar is not made available for study, it may eventually be lost to history. The collection contains "Facts and figures previously unknown, numerous shrewd reflections on men and events; social and economic peculiarities, the shape of trade and banking, of prices and rates of exchange, so that the collection stands as a mine of indispensable information to every one who wants to draw a correct and full picture of the eighteenth century. (1). It contains forty three letters addressed to Zalim Singh by Scindhias and Holkars and there are two letters addressed to his son Madho Singh. Thirty two letters are addressed to Akhairam Pancholi, who was a senior colleague of Zalim Singh

1. Dr. G.S. Sardesai: The Historical Records in Kota. Modern Review. December 1953.

for about eight initial years. The Maharaos of Kota - Durjan Shal, Ajit Sing, Guman Singh, Umed singh and Kishore Singh received over fifty letters. More than hundred letters were addressed to the first three vakils of Kota - Lalaji Ya'hwant Ballal, Lalaji Balaji and Lala Ram Chandraji Ballal who were popularly known as Panditji. The rest of the letters relate to the various parganas of Kota or the capital itself or to Mukandara pass where Zalim Singh charged import and export duty on goods. All these letters relate to a large variety of topics figuring in Zalim Singh or his ancestors' relations with the Maratha chiefs and thus form a very valuable and indispensable Source of information regarding the achievements of the great diplomat. The unpublished portion of the Daftar is made available to the genuine research workers by its owuer Pandit Chandrakant Raoji Sarola.

State documents, (e) National Archives

Zalim Singh's direct relations with the East India Company began in the early years of the nineteenth century when he was requested to help Monsoon in his vigorous offensive against Jashwant Rao Holkar. From 1816 onwards there was a considerable correspondence with the East India Company's Delhi resident who held diplomatic charge of the Rajputana states. The correspondence from 1817, when the Pindari War started, to 1824 when Zalim Singh expired is all in Persian. About a dozen letters received by Zalim Singh and the original text of the treaty of 1817 as also the original agreements between Maharao Kishore singh and the East India Company are preserved in the Bakhshikhana of Kota and are made available to scholars after a few easy official formalities. Copies of these documents are there in the National Archives; but possibly a few more letters representing earlier stages of negotiations on various political affairs can be traced in the National Archives, but they are not very essential, because the documents embodying final decisions, except the secret clause of the treaty of 1817, are available in the

Bakhshikhana, and all of them have been included in Aitchison's Treaties, Engagements and Sanads Vol. III.

Inscriptions

Zalim Singh's name figures in several hundred inscriptions in the Kota State from 1785 to 1823. He had made himself so important and powerful during this period that his name was invariably mentioned along with that of the ruler by individuals who set up stones at temples, wells, baodis, etc. to commemorate their names. Zalim Singh himself inscribed his orders, injunctions and reassurances on a large number of stones in all the important towns and villages in the state. Most of them are dated between 1805 and 1821. There are some inscriptions, however, of the earlier and later period as well. On account of his increasing usurpation of power and extensive taxation Zalim Singh had made himself very unpopular, and there was wide spread panic among the people. This state lasted for two decades and was most explosive from 1817 to 1827 when there was a constant apprehension of public disturbances against him. To allay such feeling Zalim Singh erected stones at all places of assemblages, and inscribed his concessions, remissions and reductions of taxes, and reassurances to people that justice would be maintained, nobody would be harrassed and protection would be afforded against raids etc. Every inscription begins with the name of the Maharao, followed by his own but never omitting to mention the epithet of Mamaji Raj and later Nanaji Raj by which he was addressed by Maharao Umed Singh and Maharao Kishore Singh respectively, thus conveying to the unsophisticated masses that his only title to the continuance of power was his relationship with the ruler. These inscriptions relate to a large variety of topics, mention good many taxes, and repeat assurances of good treatment in the language characteristic of Zalim Singh. Their language is always Hadauti, a dialect spoken in the area from Jhalrapatan to Jaipur with slight variations. The script also is local with one single straight headline from left to right

with a slight and artistic curve up at the right end. A few inscriptions are in the Deo Nagri script also but the language is the same.

Contemporary Writings

(i) *Tod's Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*:—The most important contemporary work is Colonel James Tod's *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan* written in 1832 just eight years after the death of Zalim Singh. The author was an Assistant Political Resident to the court of Scindhia and was deputed to negotiate with Zalim Singh the conditions on which his co-operation was desired in the campaign for the suppression of the Pindaris. When this had been accomplished, he negotiated with Zalim Singh the terms of the subordinate alliance with the East India Company and he was instrumental also in the conclusion of a supplementary treaty which vested the administratorship of the Kota state in Zalim Singh and his heirs in perpetuity. When the diplomatic negotiations were over and the British supremacy had been established all over the states of Rajputana, Colonel Tod was appointed Political Agent to the Western Rajput states. After the death of Maharao Umed Singh serious differences arose between the new ruler and Zalim Singh which culminated in the Maharao's departure from Kota; and eventually an armed contest between him and Zalim Singh took place at Mangrol in 1821. Colonel Tod played a very important part during this period of bitterness, and later on brought about a sort of reconciliation between Zalim Singh and the Maharao through the good offices of the Maharana of Udaipar. Thus the author came in very close contact with Zalim Singh from 1817 to February 1822, when the reconciliation was sealed by articles drawn up by Tod. The *Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan*, therefore, is a very reliable source of information, specially the portions which relate to Zalim Singh. Tod admits that he could not fathom the mystery of the mind of the Regent who always talked in parables, and never betrayed the secrets of his

heart even to his closest confederates. However, Tod's work is a mine of information, and a large number of episodes he relates are corroborated by the Archives of Kotah. His penpictures of Zalim Singh, and his two sons, Madho Singh and Gordhandas, are interesting and very informative.

(ii) *John Malcolm:—A Memoire of Central India:*—This is an equally important work. The author was incharge of military operations against the Pindaris for which Zalim Singh's camp at Jhalarapatan was the focus and centre. Colonel Tod also stayed at the Regent's camp during the operations. Malcolm came in personal contact with Zalim Singh on a number of occasions and obtained some insight into his charactor. From James Tod also he must have learnt and heard a good deal about the old diplomat and must have collected further useful information about his achievements from other sources. Being an author and possessing curiosity and desire for correct data, Malcolm studied the achievements of Zalim Singh as thoroughly as he could. In the two volumes of his memoires he has left us a brilliant estimate of Zalim Singh's character and achievements. "In January 1818 Malcolm was placed by the Marquis of Hastings in the military and political charge of Central India and during the four years he filled that station, his own attention and that of public officers under his authority, were directed to the object of collecting materials for the illustration of its past and present conditions. These he formed into a report, which was transmitted to Calcutta where it was printed by order of Government". This report was the groundwork of his memoires and hence it is very reliable. Having been completed in the third decade of the nineteenth century, the work is almost contemporary because Zalim Singh died in 1824.

(iii) *Kaye's Life and Correspondence of Lord Charles Metcalf:*—Metcalf was the British Resident at Delhi when the East India Company took the mighty decision of suppressing the

Pindaris and bringing the states of Rajputana under their protection. When a young boy of nineteen years and just taken in the company's service as a political officer, Metcalf had the opportunity of meeting Zalim Singh on the second April 1802 on his way from Agra to the Maratha camp. Later in 1817 he invited the Regent to send his representative to negotiate the terms of subordinate alliance at Delhi, and still later he had to deal with Zalim Singh when differences arose between the latter and the Maharao of Kota. Kaye's work is based on Metcalf's letters and papers consisting principally of private correspondence. The work, though completed and published in 1854, is really contemporary, because it is based on original letters of Metcalf.

(iv) *H.J. Prinsep's Translation of Amir nama in Persian by Busawanlal*:—Mir Khan Pindari was a close friend of Zalim Singh. His family stayed in comfort in his territory at Sher-garh, then known as Barsana. Mir Khan came in close and frequent contact with Zalim Singh. The deputy secretary of the Pindari leader was Munshi Busawanlal, a Kayastha Persian scholar of Lucknow, who wrote the biography of Mir Khan under the title of *Amir Nama*. The Pindari leader was made Nawab of Tonk in 1817 and met Lord William Bentinck at Ajmer in 1832 and the interview was extended to much beyond the usual length. The Pathan chief perceived that the details of his personal achievements were listened to with eager curiosity. Therefore, he offered to send a copy of his biography to Prinsep, who officiated as interpreter. The offer was, under the Governor General's sanction, thankfully accepted and the book was translated into English. This translation and the original preserved in the Library of His Highness the Nawab Sahib of Tonk have been used as a source of Zalim Singh's biography. The book contains numerous references to and details and observations about Zalim Singh. As the work is contemporary and was inspired by Mir Khan himself, it is of inestimable value for Zalim Singh's life and achievements.

(v) *Broughton's letters from a Maratha camp*:—Colonel Broughton was commander of the escort of the British Resident at the camp of Sindhia in the year 1809. During that year Daulat Rao Sindhia was marching about in Rajputana where all men took their prey. The letters almost exclusively relate to Rajputana and there are a number of references to Zalim Singh and his territory. The author had never met the Regent, but he had encamped in his territory and had witnessed the safety and security of the people when all round there pervaded rank anarchy and disorder. Being a keen observer and ever anxious to learn, Broughton gathered considerable correct information about Zalim Singh and, therefore, the references which he makes to him in the course of these letters which he addressed his brother in London, are very helpful and reliable. They contain a very good estimate of the character of several of Zalim Singh's personal friends like Ambaji Inglia, Jean Baptiste, Bapuji Sindhia and also his concealed adversary Saraje Rao. Though written in 1809 they do not exclusively relate to that particular year but contain observations on past events and happenings. The collection of these letters was published in 1813, that is eleven years before the death of Zalim Singh.

(vi) *Pandit Ram karan's Ahwal-i-Raj kota*:—Pandit Ram Karan was a resident of Alwar, employed by Colonel James Tod to survey the parganas of Kota for collecting material for his Annals and Antiquities relating to the Kota state. He travelled extensively almost from village to village and collected all legends and anecdotes, prepared translations of inscriptions, wrote brief account of the history of every village and collected such other material as he could. The result of his efforts he embodied in a Urdu manuscript entitled Ahwal-i-Raj Kota. The survey was made between 1817 and 1821 and, is therefore, a very reliable contemporary account.

(vii) *Thakur Lakshman Dan's Tawarikh Raj Kota*:—The author of this work was a petty jagirdar of village Atralia about

twelve miles from the Kota city. He was six years old when Zalim Singh died and wrote his book in 1858, that is thirty four years after Zalim Singh's death. The author's father was a man of some consequence and possessed accurate information of the period during which Zalim Singh was the de facto ruler of Kota. Lakshman Dan had heard the account of Zalim Singh's powerful rule from his father and had witnessed the regime of his son and grandson which were a continuation of Zalim Singh's rule. He had also witnessed the dire results of the Jhala regime. Lakshman Dan is not a good writer. His knowledge of Hindi which had not yet sufficiently developed was meagre and superficial, nor did he possess any power of reflection or penetration. His remarks and observations are, therefore, all matter of fact. He fought in the mutiny of 1857 against the rebels and, having thus risen high, served the Maharao as his adviser in the difficult days of 1857, and represented him when the British military officers encamped at Kota after the suppression of the mutiny. The manuscript of the work is in possession of Kaviraja Durgadanji of Kotri, who, besides this work, possesses a valuable collection of a number of letters and documents relating to the history of the Kota state, specially after Madan Sing, the grandson of Zalim Singh, who resigned the hereditary faujdarship of Kota and was created a ruler of the independent principality of Jhalawar.

Later works Published or Unpublished

In this category the first place is occupied by Surajmal Mishran's Vansha Bhaskara. The author was an erudite scholar in the service of Raoraja Ram Singh of Bundi, whom, when he was hardly a boy of eight years old, Col. Tod installed on the throne of Bundi. Surjmal was a Charan, and his work is a history of the Bundi state in a mixed style of Hindi poetry. It is a huge work in four volumes containing 4368 pages and was printed at Jodhpur in 1899, chiefly with the patronage of the

ruler of Kota, in whose library only a few sets of the work are now left; otherwise the book is now out of print and not available except in the big libraries of Rajasthan. The first three volumes are not of much consequence, and are full of errors, but the fourth one is important. It contains long and numerous passages relating to Zalim Singh and his ancestors, and here and there makes very incisive observations on the character of Zalim Singh, specially about his usurpation of the Maharao's power and attempt at dominating the affairs of Bundi. But the author has an open mind. He praises the veteran diplomat for his tact and talent, and admires his judicious and wise handling of a variety of chiefs and leaders—Marathas, Mughals, Pindaris and the British. Written only about forty years after Zalim Singh's death, the book is reliable and helpful.

Aitchison's treaties Engagements and Sanads

Volume IV of this series contains the treaties, engagements and sanads relating to the states of Rajputana. It gives a very brief and incorrect history of the Kota state and reproduces the copies of the treaty of 1817, the supplementary article of that treaty, the engagement of Maharao Kishore Singh agreeing to return to Kota, as also the articles drawn up by Tod for the observance and provision of Maharao Kishore Singh, and signed by Kanwar Madho Singh, son of Zalim Singh. In all these documents it is Zalim Singh or his son who figures most prominently and, therefore, the work is very important for the biography of Zalim Singh. The author was Under Secretary to the Government of India in the foreign department and had very easy access to all Government records and, therefore, the book is very authentic. Besides, it was published by the authority of the foreign department in 1909.

Lajja Ram Mehta's Umed Singh Charit

This book is based mainly on Vansh Bhaskar. It is useful because it is written in easy Hindi prose and is confined only

to the life and times of Umed Singh, the soldier, statesman and saintly ruler of Bundi, It contains a brief account of Zalim Singh's attempt at establishing his domination on Bundi and Umed Singh's interference. The book was written late in the last century and published in 1898.

Munshi Moolchand's Tawarikh Raj Kota

This is an unpublished Urdu manuscript and the original was in the possession of the author's brother. Munshi Mool Chand was a Nazim in the Kota State. His history is based on the study of Persian works and Tod's Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, as also on the legends and anecdotes he had heard from the people, and on the inscriptions of Zalim Singh which he found and studied during his touring duties. The author was a gifted man, possessing good command of the Urdu language. The book is written in a brilliant but heavy style. He has tried to be accurate so far as he could. He has given some interesting episodes of Zalim Singh's ways of justice which he had heard from the mouths of the people. He had also described the Regent's revenue system. A copy of the work was made in Hindi script in 1940 and is preserved at present in the library of the Divisional Commissioner, Kota.

Seth Indra Mal's Tawarikh ek Raj Jhalawar

This book was published in 1912 and written by order of the then ruler of Jhalawar, Maharaj Rana Bhawani Singhji. The author was allowed access to all the family records and archival material available at Jhalawar. It is a brief account of the exploits and achievements of the ancestors and descendants of Zalim Singh. The author had no historical sense, and has given just a running story of the dynasty. The book is, however, important because it gives some details of family history and certain interesting episodes of Zalim Singh's life which are not available from any other source or book. It is written in the Hadauti dialect and was published by the Jhalawar state.

Pandit Ganga Sahay's Vansh Prakash

It is a brief history of the Bundi state, in Hindi prose and based on Suraj mal Mishran's Vansh Bhaskar. The author who was a learned and scholarly diwan of Bundi has left out all the poetical descriptions of Suraj mal and given a connected and simple history of the state. It is useful because it is easily readable and intelligible, and contains several references to Zalim Singh's character and activities in Kota, Bundi and Udaipur. It was published by Khemraj Krishendas of Bombay and is now out of print. By the way, Ganga Sahay has written a lucid and excellent commentary in Sanskrit on Shrimad Bhagwat, and a very good book on Nyaya or logic.

Mahamahopadhyay Kaviraj Shyamal Dan's Vir Vinod

It is a history of the Udaipur state in about two thousand large-sized pages. It is a mine of information and very detailed, accurate and authentic history of the Udaipur state. It describes the part Zalim Singh played in the affairs of Mewar and also his policy of territorial aggrandizement manifested in his grab of the pargana of Jahazpur. It has only a corroborative value but is useful for its accuracy and preciseness. The author was a deep and erudite scholar of several languages and subjects, and one of those eminent men who came in close contact with Swami Dayanand Saraswati, the founder of the Arya Samaj. He devoted over twenty five years to the writing of this work. Though printed at the close of the last century, the book was not available to the public till very recently.

Mahamahopadhyay Pandit Gaurishanker Ojha's History of Udaipur in Hindi

The work is in three volumes and a result of much patient research. A large portion of it is based on the Vir Vinod but it contains a lot of additional matter, particularly what is based on the study of epigraphy and numismatics. It is not of much

consequence for the history of Zalim Singh because it repeats, sometimes too briefly, just what Vir Vinod has said about him.

Munihi Jwala Sahay's Woqai Rajputana in Urdu

This book is based mainly on Tod's Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, but contains also some original matter. It gives a long account of Zalim Singh's revenue system and administration and also of his relations with the East India Company. Substantially it agrees with Tod's account, but it seems that the author had collected some fresh material also, on the basis of which he gives some supplementary information. The book is not very important as reference research work but it is a very good readable history in pompous Urdu prose.

Dr. M. L. Shrama's Kota Rajya ka Itihas in Hindi

The book was written by order of His Late Highness of Kota. It is a history of Kota state in two volumes, written in Modern Hindiprose containing a brief chapter on Zalim Singh's policy and administration, based on the source material preserved in the Kota Archives and Culgule's Daftar.

CHAPTER I

ANCESTRY AND BOYHOOD OF JHALA ZALIM SINGH

Zalim Singh's place in History

Zalim Singh was a product of the second half of the 18th century. He was born in the forties of the 18th and died in the thirties of the 19th century. He had witnessed the downfall of the Mughal empire, the rise and ruin of the Maratha Power and eventually the establishment of the British Supremacy in India. Mighty events like the battles of Plassey, Panipat, Buxar, Laswari and Sitabaldi, which proved great turning points in the course of Indian History, took place during his life time. He came in close contact with numerous military adventurers and soldiers of fortune, both Indian and European, who rose to eminence in the troubled and disturbed conditions of the 18th century. Zalim Singh was personally acquainted with a number of leading princes, generals, statesmen and mighty intriguers of his times. During this era of chaotic conditions Zalim Singh's own life was one full of exploits, plots, intrigues and manoeuvres. His ambition was limitless and his dash, ability and genius were most suited to the circumstances in which he had to play the role of his destiny. But what is most creditable about him is that while all around he witnessed rack and ruin, his passion was to build and construct. He succeeded in keeping in tact the territory under his charge and evolved a sort of order and system out of chaos and disruption. It speaks volumes of his courage, tactfulness, and administrative ability. He built and constructed

when every thing was in flux. He saw that the Mughal crescent was fast waning and the tide of the Maratha conquest was rapidly ebbing and the wave of British imperialism was steadily expanding.

He conducted with remarkable tact and success the entire administrative affairs of the state of Kota for about three quarters of a century, during which period the state was a pivot of the Maratha policy of expansion and domination in Rajasthan. He also influenced the political and military events of the states of Bundi and Udaipur during a part of this period. By his grain policy he made a large portion of Rajputana dependent on him for sustenance, and by his Pateli system he associated the popular element with the administration. He came in close contact with the leading statesmen, administrators and diplomats of his age and on every occasion proved equal to each of them.

He was born during a period of tremendous transition. The Mughal glory was deplorably departing and the Maratha power was rapidly rising; while the state of Kota, where Zalim Singh's destiny was cast and his phenomenal rise to power took place, was ruled by imbecile chiefs who were subjected to a ceaseless and vigorous pressure by the Marathas. Zalim Singh was not an upstart. He was a scion of a noble family and had a respectable start in life. However, the most notable feature of his achievements is that, though an administrator of second class state like Kota, he made a place for himself in the whirlpool of the political chaos of the 18th century, and reached a height of eminence recognized by the Marathas, the Britishers and his ruling contemporaries in Rajputana.

The latter half of the 18th century in Rajputana and Central India furnished countless opportunities for personalities like Zalim Singh to prosper and flourish. At any other time he would not have become so eminent and powerful. The political chaos of this century pushed up into prominence many military

adventurers and diplomats. There was scope for every strong arm or skilful intrigue.

Zalim Singh came of a respectable Rajput family which was already well established at Kota, and, therefore, it cannot be said that he was an insignificant man whom chance made powerful, but, if the political life of the country were more stable and settled, he could not have risen higher than the mere minister of a small state. His birth contributed less to his prominence than the chaotic character of the 18th century, the inrush of the Marathas, and the rolling wave of British conquest. Zalim Singh was really born in the battle of Bhatwara, acquired manhood in the battle of the Sipra, matured in his political negotiations with the Marathas, and mellowed in his dealings with the British. Thus he was the product of both prosperity and adversity. The history of the 18th century Rajasthan is incomplete without a correct valuation of the part Zalim Singh played in it. The study of the Maratha policy in Rajasthan cannot be complete without a proper understanding of his dealings with the Scindhia and Holkar. Temperamentally and intellectually Zalim Singh fitted very well in the political pattern of the 18th century which afforded him scope for the display of his powers, diplomacy, tactfulness and treachery.

Early history of the Jhalas

Zalim Singh Jhala was so called because he belonged to the Jhala clan, who, like other clans of the Rajputs, trace their origin from a legendary or eponymous hero, and thus take it back to the remote and hoary past. Before the beginning of the Muslim invasions the Jhalas are said to be ruling over 2300 villages in Gujrat from their capital at Patdi. The fourth of the line was Harpaldeva, whose 19th successor, Jait Singh was expelled from Patdi by Muzaffar Shah of Gujrat in the closing years of the 14th century. He settled at Kuwa. After four generations, Rajdhar founded the city of Halwad in 1488, and made

it his capital. He had three sons, of whom Ranu, the youngest, seized the gadi and his elder brothers Ajja and Sajja, failing to find justice even at the hands of Sultan Muhommad Beghra of Gujrat, entered the service of the Maharana of Mewar. Ajja was killed in the battle of Panipat in 1527. and Sajja in the defence of Chitor against Bahadur Shah of Gujrat. The fifth successor from Ranu was Prithviraj. It seems that the family was disintegrated after his death, in about 1640. Out of his two sons, Sultan and Raju, the former shifted to Bankaner and the latter to Barhwan. Halwad, as a principality, entirely disappeared after Prithviraj. Raju's third son was Bhav Singh who shifted to Idar and married the daughter of the chief of Sawar, a Shaktawat fief in Mewar near Ajmer. Bhav Singh's position at Idar being shaky, he left it in search of a suitable opening at Delhi, but his wife and son, continued to stay at Sawar. The young boy, who was named Madho Singh grew to be a gallant and enterprising youth, and was regarded as an object of fear by his maternal grand-father, who apprehended that the ambitious youngman might seize his fief. (1)

Madhosingh's Career (1696-1740)

As there was no scope at Sawar for him, Madho Singh left it in quest of a suitable career and reached Bundi in 1695. The ruler of Bundi, Raoraja Aniruddha Singh, extended to him a cordial reception, and during his stay at Bundi treated him with the honour and esteem befitting his position. (2) As Anirudha Singh at this time mostly stayed with Bahadur Shah in the Punjab, Bundi could not fulfil the ambitions of Madho Singh, who, in about 1696 repaired himself with a retinue of 25 horse to Kota and entered the service of that state (3) The ruler of Kota was killed in the battle of Jajav in 1707 while fighting for the cause of Azam. Bahadur Shah's cause was defended by Buddh

1. V.B. p. 3737.

2. V.B. p. 3737, Kota Rajya Ka Itihas p. 306.

3. V.V. p. 1472.

Singh, who had succeeded Aniruddha Singh on the throne of Bundi. The victorious Bahadur Shah now set Bundi against Kota where Ram Singh's young son and successor, Bhim Singh, was preparing for the defence of his territory. At this time he seems to have felt that Madho Singh would be a very useful man and, therefore, elevated him to the post of the faujdar of Kota and put him in charge of the state forces and forts. His importance grew very rapidly when Bhim Singh, as a result of his friendship with the Saiyad brothers, made preparations to fight against the Nizam. After a few years a substantial jagir of Nanta, three miles west of Kota, was conferred on Madho Singh and his sister was married to Arjun Singh, the heir-apparent to the Kota throne. Thus Madho Singh became not only a faujdar and a jagirdar of the Kota state, but a close relation of the ruling family, and though a new comer, came to be considered as the most influential noble of the Kota State.

The author of Vir Vinod, however, says that Madho Singh went to Kota direct from Sawar, which does not seem to be correct. The details of Madho Singh's reception at Bundi given by Surajmal, the author of Vansha Bhaskara are more reliable.

Madho Singh Jhala and Ram Singh (1696-1707)

Madho Singh seems to have made no mark at Kota during the rule of Maharao Ram Singh (1696-1707). Practically during the whole period of his rule Ram Singh was with Aurngzeb, who was campaigning in the Deccan against the Marathas. It was only once during this period that he came to Kota, and that was for the accession ceremony. The only thing to be done at Kota during the continued absence of its ruler in the Deccan, was to conduct the day to day administration of the state. For this also Madho Singh was not solely responsible. He was probably one of the two or three ministers, and certainly not Musahib Ala or the Chief Minister. He joined service just at the time when Ram Singh came to the throne and the latter had

no occasion to see any display of his administrative genius or ability. Ram Singh was killed in the battle of Jajav in 1707 while defending the cause of Azam Singh. His son Bhim Singh succeeded him.

Madho Singh Jahala and Bhim Singh (1707-1720)

Madho Singh had come in closer contact with Bhim Singh. Though, as a mansabdar of 500 during his father's time, Bhim Singh must have participated in the Deccan campaign of Aurangzeb, yet he mostly stayed at Kota. Both Madho Singh and Bhim Singh were youngmen, and the latter seems to have developed admiration for the former during the period. A few years after ascending the gadi Bhim Singh appointed Madho Singh as the faujdar of Kota, and then conferred upon him a substantial jagir consisting of several villages with his seat at Nanta, a lovely village about 3 miles west of Kota. Madho Singh proved very competent and in every respect justified the confidence reposed in him.

Bhim Singh, during his brief rule of 13 years (1707-1720) had to encounter a series of difficulties and serious situations. The main difficulty Bhim Singh had to encounter was the long-drawn contest with Bundi. At the battle of Jajav Ram Singh of Kota had fought against Bahadur Shah, whose cause was gallantly defended by Buddh Singh of Bundi. To wreak vengeance for Ram Singh's effrontery Bahadur Shah permitted Buddh Singh to annex Kota to his territory. Kota was, therefore, twice invaded by the forces of Bundi but Bhim Singh put up a valiant defence and repelled them successfully. In the meanwhile, a political change took place at Delhi. After Jahandar Shah's death the situation changed altogether. Farrukh Siyar had acquired the imperial throne mainly with the help of the Saiyad brothers. Madho Singh very shrewdly and prudently advised Bhim Singh to throw in his lot with the Saiyad, Hussain Ali and Abdullah. Madho Singh's plan succeeded and now the shoe

was on the other leg. The Saiyad brothers encouraged Bhim Singh to occupy Bundi, which he did after several military actions. (1) The support of the Saiyed brothers was a great help to Bhim Singh but it cost him his life. While defending the cause of the Saiyads, he fell fighting against Nizam at Pandhar in 1720.

Bhim Singh was a man of ability and experience when he sat on the throne; but he did not possess the genius which steers on without advice or guidance and, therefore, the constant advice of Madho Singh was indispensable to him in the series of complicated situations he had to face. In the complicated tussle with Bundi, the unfriendly attitude of Bahadur Shah, the hostility of Sawai Jai Singh, the espousal of the cause of Saiyad brothers and the arrest of Farrukh Siyar, Bhim Singh must have sought the guidance of Madho Singh, the only person at Kota who next to Bhim Singh combined in him the soldierly instinct and the administrative ability. The qualities of Madho Singh continued to impress Bhim Singh so much that he accepted the hand of his sister for his son and successor (2) The importance of this alliance can be appreciated from the fact that Bhim Singh had married a princess of the royal family of Mewar and Arjun Singh could very easily be married to a princess of some leading ruling family of Rajasthan. This matrimonial alliance heightened the power and prestige of Madho Singh Jhala immensely and now even the closest cousin of Arjun Singh was not so powerful or as closely attached to Arjun Singh as Madho Singh.

Madho Singh and Arjun Singh (1720-1723)

Arjun Singh was a grown up young man in 1720 when his father was killed. He had served under Saiyad Hussain Ali Khan in the south for some time but he was much younger than

1. (a) Kotah Rajya ka Itihas Vol. I p. 255-272.

(b) Vansha Bhaskar p. 3065-3075.

2. (a) Tod. Vol. II

(b) V. B.

Madho Singh, who had served his father so faithfully and successfully and had risen so rapidly during his rule. Arjun Singh was now very close to Madho Singh and, for every thing, depended on his advice and guidance. Madho Singh was, therefore, at the height of his power during the time of Arjun Singh. But the later had only a brief spell of rule and died in 1723.

Madho Singh and Durjanshal (1723-1740)

Madho Singh continued to be the faujdar and chief adviser of Durjan Shal, who succeeded Arjun Singh. His tact and resourcefulness were of immense help to him in saving Kota from the early depredations of the Marathas. It was in Durjan Shal's time that Kota's political relations with the Mughal emperors came to an end and the state became a feudatory of the Marathas. This transference of power was fraught with political significance and it was Madho Singh who was responsible for the negotiations.

Madho Singh and the Marat has

The Marathas entered Rajputana in 1732 A.D. on the invitation of the queen of Bundi to release her capital from the control of Sawai Jai Singh of Jaipur, who had captured the state and set up his nominee to rule it. Sawai Jai Singh was one of the leading personalities in Rajputana. No body could perceive so exactly as he the coming downfall of the Mughal empire and the future rise of the Maratha power. He wanted to take the best advantage of this period for extending his territory by aggressions against his weak neighbours, and the occupation of Bundi was a part of this scheme. When all attempts of Budha Singh failed to regain his ancestral throne and Sawai Jai Singh proved too strong for him, the Maratha aid was sought by his wife. She sent her envoy to Poona to seek Peshwa's help in turning out from Bundi Salim Singh, who was holding the city as the regent of Sawai Jai Singh. The Marathas agreed to restore Bundi to Budha Singh if a price of Rs. 6,00,000/- was paid to them.

The terms having been settled, the combined forces of Holkar and Sindhia marched against Bundi through the Mukandara pass via Kota and attacked Bundi in 1732 (1) and captured Dalel Singh and reinstated Budha Singh. The latter could not however retain possession of Bundi for long. Sawai Jai Singh sent a strong force against him, and Bundi was again setzled, and Budha Singh fled away to Begun.

Kota accepted Maratha Alliance

When the Marathas retured via Kota they seemed to have made some sort of political treaty with the Maharao of Kota through his astute faujdar, Madho Singh Jhala. Rajputs must have realized the superiority of the Maratha cavalry over their traditional levies, and a man like Madho Singh Jhala must have foreseen that the future destiny of Rajasthan and particularly that of Kota lay in the hands of the Deccani raiders. There is no record detailing the terms of this treaty but a document in the Gulgule Daftar evidences that Balaji Yashwant had been stationed at Kota in the thirties of the 18th century as the wakil or representative of the Marathas. He and his descendants collected the tribute from Kota and the neighbouring territories and safe guarded the politieal and commercial interests of their masters in that region for about a century, to be exact from 1732 to 1818. Madho Singh understood very well the value and importance of the friendship with the Maratha representative, and took counsel with him, not only with regard to the payment of tribute and the conduct of the political negotiations with the Maratha chiefs, but also in respect of the internal administrative affairs of the Kota state.

Bajirao helped Kota

Col. Tod says that Bajirao I while marching against Delhi was snpplied with rations for his troops by the Kota state when he was encamped at Taraj in the Tehsil of Khanpur about 20

miles from Mukandara. On this occasion he was requested by the ruler of Kota to subdue the jagirdar of Nahargarh who had turned Mohammadan and was behaving in an hostile manner due to the support of the Mughal emperor. While proceeding further from Taraj to Delhi by the route of Baran, Kishanganj and Shahabad, Bajirao reduced the fort of Nahargarh and compelled the apostate jagirdar to do due homage to the ruler of Kota. (1) At this time the power of the Mughal empire was fast declining and Bajirao was getting stronger and stronger and the fact that he was marching against Delhi indicated the direction in which the wind was blowing. The Muslim jagirdar of Nahargarh, therefore, had no audacity to show any signs of insubordination after the reduction of his fort by Bajirao.

This story does not fit in the more authentic account according to which Bajirao marched to Delhi from Khandesh via Malwa, Bundelkhand and Western U.P. and returned by the Bhopal route, but the local legend at Kota has it that Nahargarh was seized by the Marathas and made over to Kota. Probably it was not Bajirao but some other Maratha force which might have marched through this route defending the flank of Bajirao from the Umat and Hada Rajputs of this area.

Madhosingh's Political Wisdom

It is clear that Madho Singh was responsible for supplying the rations to the Maratha camp and obtaining such a valuable return for the service rendered. By this time the political relations of Kota with the Marathas were pretty well established, and Balaji Yashwant was residing at Kota, not only as a Vakil of the Marathas, but also as a jagirdar of Kota. Madho Singh knew and understood the value of friendship with Lalaji Ballal and therefore, assigned a jagir to him. In view of this it is surprising that Madhosingh did not prevent Durjan Shal from

1. Tcd. Vo. II. p. 1374 Calcutta Ed. of 1859.

joining the imperial forces under khan Dauran, attending the Agaunch conference and proceeding to the aid the Nizam.

Further expansion of the Maratha power in Rajasthan

The period from 1732 to 1761 was one of the Maratha expansion in Northern India and Rajputana. Every Rajput state including Udaipur, Jodhpur and Jaipur accepted what may be called a subsidiary alliance with the Marathas. Peshwa Bajirao visited all the important states, exacted maximum tributes from all of them and forced them to a definite subjection. Soon after, his mother, Radhabai left Poona on pilgrimage to the various sacred places in Rajputana, and during her journey she visited Jaipur, where she was treated very lavishly and accorded a right royal welcome. During this period of ceaseless and exorbitant exactions, continued raids, appauling scarcity and difficult negotiations, Madho Singh Jhala proved equal to the task. He steered the ship of the state very skilfully and saved it from utter ruin. Kota was the gateway to Rajputana. Through the Mukandara pass the Maratha hordes used to pour into the states of Kota, Bundi and Jaipur. Besides, Kota was a small state, unable to resist the aggressions and depredations of the Deccani raiders; but it speaks volumes for the wisdom of Madho Singh that not even once during his time, Kota had to face any encounter with the Marathas. The financial strain was inevitable but an armed conflict was successfully avoided.

Bajirao appeared before Kotah and demanded ten lacs

While returning from his Delhi raid Bajirao had to fight against the Nizam near Bhopal in 1738. Though the ruler of Kota had accepted a Maratha alliance, he marched to help the Nizam against the Peshwa. He could not reach Bhopal, because Holkar stopped him from marching further near Rampura Bhanpura and turned him back. This was the last occasion on which the Kota ruler espoused the cause of the Delhi Government. Only for a few years more after this, Kota continued reciprocal

formalities with Delhi, but due to the increasing power of the Marathas and rapid decline of Delhi, even the formalities automatically ceased by 1745, and Delhi went out of picture so far as the Kota state was concerned. After the year 1746 there is no reference at all to Delhi in any record of the Kota state. A few years earlier than this the Maharao of Kota had joined the imperial forces under Khan Daurran organized for the purpose of resisting the expansion of the Marathas. The cumbrous Mughal army was immobilized by the hovering Maratha cavalry and the endeavour ended in a fiasco. Durjan Shal had also attended the Conference of Rajputana rulers convened at Agaunch by Sawai Jai Singh for the purpose of devising means and methods of resisting the rising tide of the Maratha expansion into Rajasthan. Durjan Shal committed the above three political blunders probably because neither he nor his adviser Madho Singh could very correctly fore-see that the Mughal power had no future. The Marathas considered these two acts as disloyal activities and, therefore, in 1738 after defeating the Nizam, the Pashwa appeared before the city of Kota and threatened to besiege it.

Madho Singh's tactfulness

It was on this occasion that the Madho Singh manifested great tact and sagacity. To save the city from plunder and rapine he readily agreed to pay a fine of ten lacs of rupees. Bajirao also contended himself with imposing the fine and receiving only about one lac as hard cash. The remaining amount was probably never paid. This policy of delaying and deferring the payment of fines and tributes initiated by Madho Singh was inherited as a political weapon by his successors and proved of very great help to Kota. (1)

1. (a) Thakur Lakshman Dan's manuscript History of Kota in Hindi.

(b) Vansha Bhaskar p. 3249. The account is based on Lakshman Dan's version which is more reliable than Vansha Bhaskar.

Madho Singh and Bundi

Yet another difficulty of Durjan Shal was the Bundi affair. Sawai Jai Singh of Jaipur had occupied it and set up his nominee Dalel Singh to rule there. In this connection Durjan Shal had to exert hard to carry on negotiations for military aid with the Maharana of Udaipur and the Marathas, chiefly Holkar. He suffered both in men and money but eventually succeeded in installing the rightful ruler on the throne of Bundi. During the major part of this struggle Madho Singh was the faujdar and Musahib Ala of Kota. (1) He seems to have died towards the close of Durjan Shal's rule in about 1740 when he was succeeded by his son. (2) Madan Singh on the post of faujdar of Kota.

Madan Singh (1740-1763) and Durjan Shal's succession problem

Durjan Shal had a son born of his Sisodani wife, the princess of Mewar, but he did not live long and died in his childhood. The question, therefore, as to who should succeed him, weighed very heavily on him. In consultation with his wife and Madan Singh Jhala, the faujdar, he adopted Ajit Singh, son of Shatrushal the jagirdar of Anta (3) and proclaimed the adoption ceremoniously.

Madan Singh and Marathas

As faujdar of Kota Madan Singh had to face a very serious Maratha menace in 1748. It came off as follows. Pressed by the Maharana of Udaipur, Maharaja Ishwari Singh of Jaipur agreed to restore Bundi to Umed Singh, but soon, after went back upon his promise and with the help of Ranoji Scindhia and Holkar seized Bundi, which was then temporarily held by Durjan

1. Kota Rajya Ka Itihas. part II p. 402.

Thakur Lakshman Dan's Manuscript History of Kota.

2. Tavarikh Ek Rajya Jhalawar p 77
V. B. P. 3737.

3. Tod. Vol ii. P. 416.

Shal of Kota on behalf of Umed Singh. After seizing Bundi Ishwari Singh and the Marathas marched against Kota and besieged it. The siege dragged on for two months, neither side owing defeat. On the sixty-first day a cannon ball struck Jiyaji Scindhia who, lost his arm and narrowly escaped with his life. Now negotiations for a treaty commenced in which Madan Singh proved a successful diplomat. He promised to pay an amount of four lacs as an indemnity. (1) But nothing was paid immediately and Madan Singh continued to argue that the indemnity was unjustifiable and, therefore, not payable. Ultimately he succeeded in securing its complete remission and the question of payment, therefore, never arose. (2)

Himat Singh (1753-1758)

Ajit Singh's Adoption

Madan Singh did not live long. He seems to have died a little earlier than Durjan Shal of Kota. He was succeeded by his brother, Himat Singh to the faujdarship of Kota. He was then an old man of about fiftyfive years of age. As soon as Durjan Shal died difficulties cropped up about Shatrushal's adoption. Himatsingh argued that Ajit Singh was the rightful successor and that it was highly ridiculous and improper that Ajit Singh be deprived of his right of succession to the Kota throne, and his son should become the ruler. Himat Singh, therefore proposed that Ajit Singh should succeed Durjan Shal and the adoption ceremony of the Shatru Shal be declared null and void. This proposal was strongly opposed by Durjan Shal's widowed queen who had given her consent to the adoption of Shatru Shal during the life time of her deceased husband. Her attitude was apparently reasonable. Ajit Singh was an extremely old man. He was 80 years' old and very weak and infirm. The

1. Tod. Vol.ii/416

2. Kota Rajya Ka Ithihas Vol- II. P. 292

It was not Himat Singh Jhala but Madan Singh Jhala who negotiated the treaty.

Dowager queen was much below 50 years. She said that it would be highly ridiculous that she should adopt as son a relative who was even older than her father. But Himat Singh would not listen to these protests. He had his own reasons for supporting the cause of Ajit Singh. He wanted to have on the throne of Kota a man who would be subservient to his will and completely under his control; and an old and infirm man was most suitable for this purpose. Himat Singh, however, argued that an old and experienced man like Ajit Singh was most fitted for the situation which Kota was about to face. The Maratha exactions and raids were daily increasing and there was the constant fear of an invasion by Maharaja Ishwari Singh of Jaipur who, on account of Durjan Shal supporting the cause of Bundi, was hostile to Kota and was looking for a suitable opportunity to invade Harauti. The arguments of Himat Singh were neither correct nor convincing. Shatrushal was himself a middle aged man beyond 40 years of age, and, being the eldest son of Ajit Singh, had a pretty good experience of conducting the affairs of his jagir at Anta. The Dowager Maharani was supported in her attitude by a number of Hada Jagirdars of Kota. The people also expected Shatru Shal to succeed, but Himat Singh was too powerful for all of them. Though the adoption case became a tangle and was kept hanging on for about eight months, ultimately it was Himat Singh Jhala who triumphed, and old Ajit Singh was adopted from Anta to succeed Durjan Shal.

The Maratha wanted to annul the adoption

The Marathas used to keep themselves very well informed through a net work of spies posted at Kota, as to the trends of affairs in the state. They must have, therefore, followed the various stages of the adoption question which was the most important problem for the last three years; but they did not interfere at any stage of its progress, and let it develop as it did. When Ajit Singh's adoption was finalized they raised a consti-

tutional question that the Kota was the feudatory state of the Marathas and, therefore, Ajit Singh could not be adopted without their previous consent. They, therefore, demanded Ajit Singh's return to Anta. When this was not done, the Scindhia and Holkar both appeared in the vicinity of Kota with their large hordes, and threatened to seize the city if their demand was fulfilled.

Himat Singh's tactfulness

Realizing that the situation was critical and resistance or negotiations would not avail, Himat Singh Jhala hit upon a piece of social strategy. He advised the dowager Maharani to send a Rakhi to the Scindhia and request him to extend recognition to Ajit Singh. To avoid the impending calamity, she accepted the suggestion and the Scindhia, though a predatory chief, succumbed to her sentimental appeal and recognized Ajit Singh as the rightful heir to the Kota throne. Thus Scindhia accepted Durjan Shal's widow as his adoptive sister and the relationship thus established continued for three generations on both sides.

The Maratha chiefs demanded a nazrana of forty lacs from Kota.

The Scindhia was won over by the above tactics of Himat Singh, but Holkar felt that the whole thing was slipping off. As a realist he would have nothing of Scindhia's sentimental regard for the queen's rakhi, and wanted a substantial hard cash as his prize. Ultimately Scindhia also agreed with him. A nazarana of forty lacs was demanded from Kota in lieu of recognizing Ajit Singh as a ruler of Kota. Himat Singh agreed to pay the nazrana and thereby warded off a great political calamity of Kota. In this transaction Himat Singh proved more than a match for the Maratha chiefs. The fine was agreed to, no doubt, and the first four annual instalments were probably paid, but the balance of thirty lacs remained unpaid for ever. Repeated promises were made and recurring engagements were signed by Himat Singh to pay this tremendous amount, but the promise was never implemented.

Marathas Press for Payment

It was not difficult for the Maratha chiefs to look through the designs of Himat Singh. When they found that the payment of the past fines and impositions was not coming off they increased the pressure and forced Himat Singh to come to definite terms. In 1756 the position was, therefore, examined by the representatives of the Marathas, and the amount payable by Kota was fixed at fifty-six lacs and ninty thousand. ¹

This agreement did not, however, prevent Malhar Rao Holkar from investing the fort of Suket in the Kota state in 1758. A fierce fight took place and the Marathas retreated only to besiege another fort nearby. ² The same year an amount of Rs. 68,000/- was fixed to be paid to the Marathas as Ghori Barar or Horse tax. This was collected community-wise from the residents of the Kota city.

By this time the leading states of Rajputana were completely under the heels of the Marathas. Ishwari Singh of Jaipur had committed suicide for fear of them, and his son Madho Singh was pathetically subservient to them. Umed Singh of Bundi had agreed to pay an amount of ten lacs to them for his restoration to the ancestral throne and had become a feudatory of the Raja of Satara. ³ Kota was already over head and heels in debt to them. The position of Udaipur was no better and Jodhpur was under their constant and vigorous pressure.

Himat Singh's Wisdom

Kota had no competent ruler after Bhim Singh and the affairs of the state were guided solely by the Jhala faujdars of the State, That during such critical times they saved the state from utter ruin indicates the diplomatic sagacity of

1. Kota State archives. s. 1813 and 1817.

2. Kota State archives s, 1815 Bsta 501.

3. V.B. p. 3597 3588, 3603, 3613-22.

Himat Singh and his two able ancestors. With every battle that was fought, with every raid that was committed and with every agreement that was signed in Rajasthan Himat Singh Jhala was intimately acquainted, and was interested in every other activity of the Marathas. Only thus could he steer the ship of the Kota state safely through storms and stresses.

Himat Singh's Further Troubles.

Of the heavy amount of forty lacs which was imposed on Kota as Nazarana for the recognition of Ajit Singh's adoption hardly the first instalment was paid when Ajit Singh died, and Maratha chiefs found yet another excuse of extorting a further amount from the impoverished state. This took place in 1758 when the finances of the Marathas were at the lowest ebb. Holkar and Scindhia were carrying on their predatory raids in order to find money to pay their soldiers whose salary had been in arrears for the last several months. They extorted four lacs from the small and petty state of Shahpura, and then marched against Kota, and having encamped in the vicinity of the city, demanded a heavy amount for the recognition of Shatru Shal as successor of Ajit Singh. As it was not possible for Kota to give more, they contented themselves by accepting two lacs in ready cash, and, having granted recognition to Shatru Shal, marched away.¹

Thus the Kota State was groaning under the recurring heavy financial demands of the Marathas on the eve of the battle of Panipat. The state coffers were empty and the Maratha demand was unending. Himat Singh Jhala was experiencing extreme difficulty in keeping the Marathas in good humour. His difficul-

1. Falka Vol. I letter No. 196 and 212
 S. P. D. Vol II—Numbers 94, 95, 96, Vol. 27 Nos.
 230 and 136
 Sarkar. Fall of the Mughal Empire Vol. II, p. 104—95.

ties were further enhanced by the most unfriendly and hostile attitude of Sawai Madho Singh of Jaipur, who was demanding an immediate settlement of the question of the eight Kotries, failing which he threatened to resort to armed action.

Himat Singh died in 1758, leaving no issue. His two elder brothers Madan Singh and Gopal Singh had predeceased him. Gopal Singh had not made any mark in life and seems to have died issueless, but Madan Singh had served Kota as faujdar for thirteen years (1740-1753). He had a son named Prithi Singh who was born in 1720 and was married in a respectable family of Shaktawat Rajputs sometimes about 1738 but he died soon after the marriage. His wife, the Shaktawat lady gave birth to a posthumous son in 1739. (1) He was a little over 18 years of age when Himat Singh died. As the latter had no issue, he had adopted this young man who was named Zalim Singh, as his son. Zalim Singh inherited the ancestral jagir of Nanta and also succeeded to the hereditary post of the faujdar of Kota.

When Zalim Singh became faujdar (1758) the Marathas were at the height of their power. They had plundered the diwan-i-khas and the imperial palace of Delhi. Their power had extended as far north as Peshawar, and by the majority of the people they were looked upon as the masters of the country. To begin with Zalim Singh was not in charge of the administration of the state. He was definitely the second man, the first man being Akhai Ram Pancholi. As soon as the young man took up the reins of the office in his hands, he must have realized that the Marathas were all powerful and the future of India lay in their hands. For the first few years he worked as a colleague of Akhai Ram Pancholi, but the circumstances so developed that he suddenly acquired eminence and became the shaper of the future destiny of Kota.

CHAPTER II

THE BATTLE OF BHATWARA

Zalim Singh Acquires Eminence

A serious conflict occurred between Kota and Jaipur in 1761, a few months after the disastrous battle of Panipat. It took place in respect of the eight principalities known as Kotries, consisting of a compact region conterminous with the territories of the states of Kota, Bundi, and Jaipur. They had recently become a bone of contention between Bundi and Kota. It was this conflict which brought Zalim Singh suddenly into prominence and made him the most important man in Kota, and one of the leading figures in Rajputana. A brief account of these eight principalities will not be out of place.

The Eight Kotries

The eight Kotries are—Pipalada Gainta, Karwad, Pusod, Indargarh, Khatoli, Balban and Antarda. Of these the first four fiefs were founded by the discendents of Hirdya Narayan, a younger son of Rao Ratna of Bundi. According to the tradition which had hardened into a rule the younger brother of the ruler of Bundi used to be the administrator of Kota and the parganas attached to it.¹ It was in that capacity that Hirdya Narayan ruled at Kota for about 20 years and behaved very gallantly in several imperial battles in which he participated and was held in great esteem in the Mughal court; but his career had an inglorious end.² While fighting on behalf of the Emperor in the

1. Inscription at Gaiparnath, a temple of Mahadev situated on the right bank of the river Chambal about 11 miles south of the city of Kota.

2. V.B. pp. 2486 2495 and 2496.

the battle of Allahabad in 1624 he had to leave the field, it is not definitely known why. ¹ Probably the pressure of Raja Bhim Singh of Udaipur was unbearable or as the local tradition says his elephant was wounded severely and fled away from the battlefield carrying away Hirdya Narayan on its back. ² As a result of this mishap, Hirdya Narayan was in 1624 deprived of the charge of Kota, which was now made over to Rao Ratna's younger son Madho Singh, who had distinguished himself in several actions while espousing the cause of Emperor Jahangir against his rebellious son, Khurram. ³ Madho Singh, however, had the magnanimity of requesting the Emperor to make a suitable provision for his uncle Hirdya Narayan. Accordingly he was given a big jagir under the fort of Ranthambhore. In course of time it split up into four small principalities namely Pipalda, Gainta, Karwad and Pusod. The remaining four Kotries were founded by the successors of Indar Singh and his brother Bairi Sal, who were the sons of Gopinath, the eldest son of Rao Ratan. By his inglorious character Gopinath had incurred so much displeasure of his father that not only he but his son Indar Singh also had been disinherited from the succession to the Bundi throne. ⁴ The disinherited scion was given a big jagir under the Sarkar of Ranthambhore and was made a mansabdar of one thousand. ⁵ His jagir

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1. Bhim Singh was the younger brother of Maharana Karn Singh of Udaipur. He accompanied, with a contingent of 1000 Rajputs, the rebellious prince Khurram when the latter marched towards Allahabad where he came in grip with the imperial troops. Hirdya Narayan was with the imperial forces.
 2. V.B. pp. 2495 and 2496.
 3. (i) V.B. pp. 2487, 2500-2504
 (ii) Maasir-ul-Umara Part I. p. 251.
 (iii) Munshi Mool Chand pp. 73-76.
 4. V.B. pp. 2446, 2447, 2450, 2452, 2463, 2465, 2466,
 5. Maasir-ul-Umara

got split up in course of time in four principalities namely, Indargarh, Khatoli, Balban and Antarda, each held by one of his successors.

Ahmad Shah made over Ranthambhore to Madhosingh

These eight principalities were under the protection of the sarkar of Ranthambhore and were directly under the imperial faujdar. When the fort of Ranthambhore was made over to Raja Madho Singh of Jaipur by Ahmad Shah of Delhi in the year 1753, the question arose as to whom the principalities should transfer their allegiance. These Kotries paid peshkash to the faujdar of Ranthambhore and served under him.¹ They had a tie of blood with Bundi but expected more sympathy from Kota, which also was an off-shoot of Bundi and hence their kith and kin. Besides, Himat Singh Jhala was a man of ambition and his relations with the Marathas were quite friendly, while between Madho Singh and the Marathas there was not much love lost. The former could not forget that his brother Ishwari Singh had to commit suicide due to the relentless siege and exorbitant exactions of the Marathas. He was constantly conspiring and intriguing against the Marathas and withholding the fixed tributes from them except when he could not escape from it. Himat Singh exploited this situation and turned it to his own advantage by promising political protection to the kotries if they transferred this allegiance to the Maharao of Kota.² Himat Singh died soon after the settlement and now the responsibility of honouring the agreement, devolved upon Akhai Ram Pancholi and the intrepid Jhala Zalim Singh, who had inherited the powers and position of his adoptive father. Zalim Singh was also equally anxious and had confidence in his diplomacy with which, he was

1. (a) *Tarikh-i-Ahmed Shahi* p. 94 a.

(b) J.N. Sarkar, *Fall of the Mughal Empire* Vol. I 2nd. ed. page, 293

(c) V.V. pp. 1418, 1419

2. V.V. pp. 1418-1419

sure, he would secure the Maratha support. He was, therefore, prepared for any eventuality to retain the protectorate of these principalities. The eight chiefs were formally received by the Maharao of Kota and treated with due honour and an assurance was extended to them that if the Raja of Jaipur forced the issue, Kota was prepared to face it. On hearing that the chiefs of the eight Kotries had signed the agreement, Madho Singh of Jaipur mobilized his forces against Kota.

Madho Singh marched his troops

Madho Singh led his troops as far as Uniara, a jagir touching the boundary of the Kotries. The Thakur of this principality had turned hostile for sometime and was behaving like an independent chief, taking advantage of the seven year long struggle which had raged between Ishwari Singh and Madho Singh for the throne of Jaipur. The Jaipur troops besieged Uniara and forced the Thakur to come to terms. Flushed with this initial victory and having reduced the Thakur to subjection, Madho Singh returned to his capital, while his troops marched on into the Kota territory. The Jaipur troops crossed into the Kota territory at Palighat, a ford at the confluence of Chambal and the Parbati, six miles to the north of Dhipari in the territory of Indargarh. The responsibility of defending this ford was that of the Jagirdar of Sultanpur in the Kota state. With his slender resources, he faced the invading troops and fell fighting most gallantly while performing his duty. The Jaipur troops forced their march on, and reached the neighbourhood of the village of Bhatwara, four miles from the Tahsil head quarters of Mangrol. Here they came face to face with the Kota troops which were commanded by the youthful Zalim Singh, who was assisted by Akhai Ram Pancholi and Dhabhai Jaskaran.¹ Kota had been preparing for this conflict four about an year since the Kotries

1. (a) Kota Archives S. 1816-1820 Basta 58, Bhandar I, Battle of Bhatwara between Kota and Jaipur S. 1818

(b) V.V. 1418.

started negotiations for the transfer of allegiance. Since the battle of Panipat Holkar had visited Kota twice, once while returning from Delhi, and next when he came from Indore. Each time he was met by Rai Akhai Ram Pancholi near about the boundary of the Kota state and was offered a nazar of fifty one thousand on the first occasion and of rupees 13757 on the next, to escape the plunder and ruin by his troops. ¹ The Maharao of Kota knew that it was not an easy job to encounter the army of Madho Singh in the battlefield and that the victory could be ensured only if Holkar consented to espouse the Kota cause. With this object the Maharao sent Rai Akhai Ram Pancholi to Malhar Rao Holkar, who was then encamped at Madhkargarh in the Mukandara pass. ² The place today is known as Mandargarh and is in ruins. Akhai Ram requested Holkar to throw in his weight on the side of Kota. ³ The state archives do not mention as to what was the nature of support which Holkar agreed to extend. What is given is that an amount of rupees two thousand five hundred sixty one and annas five was spent ⁴ on account of Malhar Rao Holkar accompanying the Kota forces to the field of Bhatwara. ⁵ Col. Tod, we do not know on what basis, mentions that Malhar Rao Holkar declined to fight but promised that, encamped near about the scene of action, he would watch the progress of fight and would plunder the party which would sustain defeat. This celebrated historian was not sympathetic to the Marathas and what he has written might be due to his estimate of Holkar's character. Though the terms, on which Malhar Rao Holkar agreed to be encamped near the neighbourhood of battlefield, are not definitely known, it is clear that his presence with large troops near the vicinity of the battle ground might have led the

1. Kota State Archives, s. 1818

2. Kota State Archives of s. 1818

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid.

5. Kota Archives of s. 1818, Hisab Dakhaniyon ka Nazaran ko.

commander of the Jaipur forces to think that the Maratha leader was holding himself in readiness to fight on behalf of Kota if need arose. This fact must have been of very great help to Kota.

The Participants in the Fight

The strength of the Jaipur forces has been estimated variously from twenty thousand to about a lac, but twenty-five thousand would be a reasonable estimate.¹ With the Jaipur forces there were several important jagirdars of that state with their levies, namely Hamir Singh of Ramgarh, Ajit Singh of Isarda, Bhairu Singh of Suhad, Ajit Singh of Sorsa, Bhawani Singh of Palan-Hera and Shyam Singh of Seva. Besides, there were several Shekhawat jagirdars. The Kota forces were commanded by Zalim Singh and to advise him in emergency Rai Akhaim Singh Pancholi and Dhabhai Jaskaran were also with him.² Almost all the important jagirdars of Kota were with the troops namely Roop Singh of Palaitha, Nath Singh of Rajgarh, Bakhat Singh of Siswali with his son Kanwar Badan Singh, Chand Singh of Sarthal, Mangat Singh of Relawan, Inder Singh of Motikua and Guman Singh of Nagda.³ Daulatsingh Hardavat, Kushal Singh Gaud, Naunand Singh Rajawat, Sarwan Singh Daundhia, Prithi Singh Saungara of Dhawala, Udai Singh Shekhawat, Jawan Singh Kitawat, Pithi Singh Jadu, Rawat Makham Singh Mewavat Harda, Akhai Singh Rathod, Baghsingh Rathod, Rao Shambhu Singh, Sangram Singh Jhala, Kanwar Himat Singh Sesodia and Dhabhai Shambhu Singh also joined with their levies. Besides these, there were eleven more jagirdars of lesser importance. From the eight Kotries several jagirdars

1. (i) Thakur Lakshman Dan's manuscript History of Kota State in Hindi.

(ii) Tod.

2. Kota Archives s 1818 Bata 58, Bhandar No 1

3. Ibid

came to participate in the fight on behalf of Kota namely-Sanman Singh of Pipalda and Hamir Singh and Khuman Singh of Karwad and Kushal Singh of Gainta. Each of them brought his own levy. All together the strength of their levy was over 500. ¹ The forces of Kota and Jaipur were both supported with artillery and Holkar also had his own field guns with him.

The Battlefield of Bhatwara

The battlefield of Bhatwara had been prepared for the action already by Kota, as if tournaments were going to be played there. ² Bhopa and Gumana who were the headmen of their villages were deputed to prepare the battle field for the action and Rs. 10/- were paid to them as wages. The Kota troops were mobilized simultaneously with those of Jaipur. Zalim Singh wanted to encounter them as far away from Kota as possible. He kept himself informed of their daily movements and the direction in which they were marching. Zalim Singh selected the battle field near the village of Bhatwara about four miles from Mangrol, the head quarters of the present Tehsil of that name. The Jaipur troops had just crossed the Banganga, a small rivulet. It was still flowing and the troops had to ford it knee deep. On the right side there was another stream which though smaller than Banganga was boggy and not easily crossable in this season. In early November Zalim Singh had all the advantages of an easy retreat if necessary as far as back as Kota, but the retreat of Jaipur troops was considerably more difficult on account of the two rivers they had to cross namely either Banganga and Kali Sindh or the boggy stream and the Kali Sindh.

The battle started on the third day of the latter half of the month of Aghan and raged for 3 days ending till late in the afternoon on the fifth day of the fortnight. ³

1. Ibid

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

The battle begins

The action began with the firing of the Jaipur artillery, as a result of which about 700 men of Kota met their instantaneous death and there was a great consternation among the troops. But Zalim Singh held prompt counsel with his military officers and the leading jagirdars of Kota and decided that an all-out attack be delivered and every thing should be staked for victory. With desperate determination the forces were collected and put into action. Zalim Singh ordered the cavalry charge and the battle raged for several hours but ended in a draw on the first day. It began before noon on the following day and again the fighting ceased in the evening without any decisive result.

Jaipur defeated

On the third day both the sides fought with a desperate doggedness and tenacity. Many heroic feats were performed by the leading soldiers on both sides, but Zalim Singh delivered such a vigorous charge and the other jagirdars advanced with such reckless valour that the Jaipur forces were shaken and broken and began to flee from the battlefield. The fleeing forces were pursued by the Kota troops. On the way they had to cross a small boggy rivulet in which a number of horses and elephants got stuck. This afforded an opportunity to the pursuers to capture animals and property of Jaipur and a lot of booty fell in their hands. Further on at a distance of about 10 miles near the village of Kherada, the fleeing forces were again stuck in a rivulet and again a lot of animals and property fell in the hands of the pursuers and the villagers. The camp and property which were left behind near the battle ground by the Jaipurians were plundered by Malhar Rao Holkar. Seventeen elephants, 1800 horses, 73 pieces of cannon and a state flag of Jaipur fell in the hands of the Kota troops.¹

1. (a) Thakur Lakshmandan's manuscript History of Kota in Hindi
(b) V.V, pp. 1418

The Kherada episode became a subject of satire in the neighbouring villages. The villagers used to say- “रजा की रजाई गई खेरदा के खाल में ।” Thakur Ajit Singh of Isarda and Bhairu Singh of Suhad, who were in charge of Jaipur artillery, and, who exhibited a remarkable gallantry in initial attillery action, but who took to disgraceful flight before Zalim Singh's onslaught also came in for popular comments by the villagers. The casualties in the Jaipur forces are not known but they must have, been pretty heavy, which is evident from the fact that 1800 horses were captured by the pursuers and a large number were wounded and killed on the battle field. About 200 combatants among whom there were several respectable jagirdars were taken prisoners by Kota and were confined in the fort of Gagron. Kota also sustained heavy casualties. Nine important jagirdars were killed including those of Rajgarh, Nanta, Railawan, Malikhera, Gainta and Pipalda. The younger brothers of Indargarh and Khatoli were also killed. Besides, about 3000 men were lost and the loss of horses and other property was also considerable. ¹

The reception of victorious forces by the Maharao

The victorious forces returned to Kota on the 7th day of the latter half of Agahan. Maharao Shatrushal of Kota gave them a hearty reception at a distance of four miles from the capital. Malhar Rao Holkar was also conducted to Kota by the Maharao and attended the Darbar at which the booty acquired on the battlefield and on the rivulets of the Sukani and Kherada were displayed and reviewed. The five-colour flag of Jaipur was considered from the sentimental point of view the richest booty and from that day onwards it used to be exhibited on the head of the effigy of Rawan on the occasion of the Deshhara festival. ²

1. Lakshmandan's manuscript History of Kota in Hindi

2. (a) Kota State Archives S. 1818. Basta 58, Bhandar No. 1

(b) Lakshmandan's manuscript History of Kota in Hindi.

Those wounded on the battlefield were treated at Mangrol and the expenses of treatment were borne by the Kota state.¹ They were sent to their homes after full recovery. The prisoners captured were kept in the fort of Gangron.² Malhar Rao Holkar received the present of a saropav and Rs. 500/- in cash from the Kota ruler.³ Besides him his military officers, namely Bitthal Mahadeva, Krishnaji Tantia, Pandit Raoji Karkun, and Raghoji Sonji also received presents.⁴ Similar presents were sent to Janakoji Sindhia though he was not present.⁵ Akhai Ram Pancholi met Malhar Rao Holkar separately and presented to him a saropav which was supplied by the state.⁶ The successors of the jagirdars who were killed on the battle field were each presented a horse worth Rs. 500.⁷ Heirs of every jagirdar who was killed in the battlefield were installed in their jagirs. Those who returned alive were also greatly honoured. There were 25 jagirdars who were recipients of such honours.⁸ Altogether the total expenses on the battle of Bhatwara came to Rs. 35,598/-⁹ Thakur Laksmandan mentions in his manuscript that an amount of Rs. 4,00,000/- were offered to Malhar Rao Holkar as a prize to support Kota but the accounts of the year do not show any entry to this effect. What has been discovered so far is that an amount of Rs.2561/9/- was incurred on account of Holkar who accompanied the Kota forces to Bhatwada.¹⁰ The only extra amount spent on him was the present given in the darbar and at the time of the

1. Ibid and Lakshmandan's manuscript History of Kota.

2. Ibid and Lakshmandan's manuscript History of Kota.

3. Ibid

4. Ibid

5. Kotah State Archives Samvat 1818

6. Ibid

7. Ibid

8. Ibid

9. Ibid

10. Ibid

exchange of visit to Rai Akhai Ram Pancholi.¹ Besides, small sums were spent on the treatment of Holkar's elephant which seems to have received a stray shot during the course of the battle.² The elephant was kept at Mangrol for treatment and 101 takas (Rs. 3/2/-) were daily spent on its feeding. Some of his soldiers were either wounded or killed³ but that also was probably due to stray action on the fringe of the battle field or near about the camp. The casualties were not at all high. It shows that Malhar Rao Holkar did not actually participate in the action at Bhatwada.

It was not a Maratha action

The Maratha sources claim that the battle of Bhatwada was fought between Malhar Rao Holkar and Madho Singh. They say that the Jaipur ruler was very powerful in 1761 and was defying the Mahatma demand for the fixed tribute. By 1761 an amount of Rs. 20,00,000/- were due from Jaipur, for the payment of which demands had been repeatedly made, but Madho Singh had been giving evasive replies and had been avoiding payment. The disastrous defeat of the Marathas in the battle of Panipat in 1761 had encouraged Madho Singh to adopt an openly hostile attitude, and he marched against Holkar after the monsoon of 1761. Holkar also started to meet him somewhere in the Kota territory and was joined on his way by 300 troops of Kota which were headed by Zalim Singh, Diwan Akhai Ram Pancholi and his foster brother Dhabhai Jaskaran. He checked the further progress of Jaipur troops at Bhatwada where a battle raged for 2 days, ultimately ending in the complete rout of the Jaipur forces on 29th November, 1761.

The above description appears to be a boast. Madho Singh succeeded his brother in 1750. His state was in rack and ruin as

1. Ibid

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

a result of a long drawn struggle of 7 years which raged between his deceased brother and himself for the throne of Jaipur. Ishwari Singh committed suicide because he found himself unable to defend himself and his people against the relentless siege and pressure of the Marathas. Soon after his accession to the throne in the wake of such tragic and disastrous events, Madho Singh could not have become strong and powerful in a mysterious and sudden manner. A number of his jagirdars, namely those of Ninawa, Uniara, and Patan had turned refractory and his treasury was empty. For several years after his sucession, his main problem was how to rebuild the sources of his state and reduce the hostile jagirdars to obedience. Besides, the period between 1750 to April 1761 was one of continuous expansion of the Maratha influence and power in north India. It was during this period that they claimed to exercise the ruling authority from Attac to Kuttak and their saffron flag had been planted as far as Peshwar. Ahmad Shah Abdali had not of course, reconciled himself to the loss of the Punjab but the Marathas were not going to relax their hold except as a result of an armed conflict. It is inconceivable that under such circumstances Madho Singh, whose hands were too full with his own domestic problems, could think of defying the authority of the Marathas and even marching against Malhar Rao Holkar. The Marathas had been defeated in the summer of 1761 but Malhar Rao Holkar did not actually participate in the fateful struggle and his forces were, therefore, quite in tact. Madho Singh, a hero of several battles, and with his experience of countless ups and downs in life, could not be ignorant of this fact. In spite of this, he expected that a force of fifteen or twenty thousand Rajputs would achieve something against Holkar, he must have gone mad.

In the archives of Jaipur there is no evidence, that Madho Singh was preparing for a conflict against the Marathas. In fact after the failure of the pact of Hurda near Agaunch (Mewar) in October, 1734, the Rajput rulers had left thinking of resisting the

expansion of the Maratha power, ¹ which during the fifties of the 18th century and in fact even earlier had come to be regarded invincible. The accounts of the battle of Bhatwada in the archives of Kota and Jaipur, and the legends which have gathered and grown round the personality of Zalim Singh, as also the traditions which have survived, all indicate that the battle was fought between Kota and Jaipur on account of the eight principalities. If Kota troops had joined Holkar as mere auxiliaries, the booty acquired at Bhatwada could not be exhibited in a darbar at Kota, and it was not necessary for the Maharao to receive or welcome the troops at a distance of four miles from the capital. What is most significant is that Zalim Singh and Akhai Ram Pancholi were sent by the Maharao of Kota to seek support from Malhar Rao Holkar. ² The accounts of the year show that only Rs. 35,000/- were spent on account of Malhar Rao Holkar. ³ Besides, each and every soldier of Holkar was paid a petia or daily wages for three days, that is actually for the days of the battle by the Kota State. ⁴ The detailed account of the money thus spent is given in the contemporary records. It is interesting to note that the highest wages paid to a combatant in Holkar's forces were four annas daily and the lowest six pice per day. ⁵ Thus in the records prepared and kept actually on the very days when the battle was in action there is ample and irrefutable evidence to show that the battle was fought between Kota and Jaipur, and Holkar was there just to take his chance of making plunder or to help Kota if necessity arose, or to grab something from the state.

1. (a) *Fall of Mughal Empire* p 140

(b) Ojha, *History of Udaipur* p. 629-629

(c) *V.B.* p. 1218, 1220, and 1221

2. Kota State Archives of s. 1818-1820 -Basta No. 59 Do Varki Parchone Ke Kagaz-Battle of Bhatwada between Kota and Jaipur.

3. *Ibid*

4. *Ibid*

5. *Ibid*

CHAPTER II

ZALIM SINGH'S EMERGENCE TO POWER

His Services Acknowledged by the Maharao

In the battle of Bhatwara Zalim Singh had shown a marvelous resourcefulness and tenacity, and distinguished himself as a great commander. His valour and gallantry were acclaimed by all and became the subject of popular songs and tales. His deeds are still sung in popular gatherings in the region round about Bhatwada. Maharao Shatrushal of Kota received him with great honour in an open darbar, held to celebrate the victory, and generously acknowledged the great services he had rendered to the state. This was done in the presence of Malhar Rao Holkar who was present in the darbar. This was the beginning of Zalim's rapid rise to power and eminence. He was already a faujdar of Kota but his reputation was not yet established, because he had just succeeded to the status of his adoptive father. The post of faujdar had become hereditary and Zalim Singh became faujdar when he was hardly eighteen years old. Of course, he must have given promise of his talent and genius even in his young days but the laurels he won at the battle of Bhatwara made him at once the most prominent man of Kota and one of the leading figures of Rajputana. His dash and push and leadership had been witnessed personally by Malhar Rao Holkar through whom Zalim Singh's reputation travelled to all important quarters of the Maratha power. The leading jagirdars of Jaipur state were either killed or routed in the action and those who survived had experienced a terrible onslaught and attack delivered by this young and intrepid youth. In Jaipur, therefore, Zalim Singh was referred to as a saviour of Kota and his name

was associated with uncommon bravery and tactfulness. Zalim Singh several distant relatives had fought in the battle, and the Maharana was interested in the affairs of Kota state as also in the fortunes of Madho Singh of Jaipur. The bravery and dash of Zalim Singh exhibited in the battle of Bhatwara became, therefore, a subject of popular talk in Mewar specially in the jagirdar families. Zalim Singh now came to be regarded as a great hero, a great general and a great administrator. This was really a glorious beginning of a great career which Zalim Singh built for himself during the next sixty years of his life.

Zalim Singh Appointed As Musahib--Ala

Akhai Ram Pancholi was at that time the Musahib-Ala or the Dewan of Kota and played indeed a very important part in negotiating the support of Malhar Rao Holkar in the conflict that took place with Jaipur, but he did not and was not capable of showing any remarkable resourcefulness or gallantry in the battle field. Zalim Singh's sudden rise to eminence, soon after the battle of Bhatwara, eclipsed the importance of Akhai Ram Pancholi, who, before long, sank into insignificance and the entire power of the administration of the Kota state naturally began to centre in the hands of Jhala Zalim Singh. A defacto administrator he already was. Now he became a de-jure administrator also. Young but cautious and tactful, Zalim Singh began to wield real power in the state. And soon after, on Guman Singh's accession he was appointed Musahib-i-Ala in a formal manner on December 28, 1764. His reputation as a general and diplomat had already reached the courts of Scindhia, Holkar and Peshwa, who now began to correspond direct with him in respect of all matters relating to Kota. Maharao Shatrushal died issueless in 1764 and was succeeded by his younger brother Guman Singh. The change of rule did not affect the position or power of Zalim Singh, who continued to function as the chief minister, in fact, the de-facto ruler of the Kota state. Guman Singh (1765-1771) was

about forty years of age when he ascended the throne but he was man without any practical experience of administration and had neither the guts nor the talents for facing difficult situations. He possessed no strength of character, and in any case was not a match for Zalim Singh. But he did not like to be a puppet in the hands of the young ambitious Jhala, and now and then wanted to assert himself as a ruler, though in vain.

Expelled from Kotah

It was but natural that the elderly courtiers should feel jealous of such a young man who was dominating all. It is said that Zalim Singh inflicted very cruel tortures on one of the leading and wealthy businessman of Bagherwal Vaishya community, which, judged from the principles or standards of justice then prevalent in the various states and even in the parts of the Mughal empire, was not unusual or horrifying, but it provided a good handle to his rivals who poisoned the ears of the not too wise Maharao Guman Singh. Possibly the ruler himself might have begun to feel nervous by the rising tide of Zalim Singh's power, and therefore, succumbed very readily to the intriguing complaints of his wily advisors, and demanded an explanation from Zalim Singh for his cruel behaviour towards the merchant. The attitude of Zalim Singh was neither submissive nor satisfactory. Guman Singh, therefore, expelled him from Kota. The young adventurer went to Mewar where he was accorded an affectionate welcome by the Jhala noble of Sadari¹ who was his remote relative, and who introduced him to the Maharana of Mewar.² The Jhala's reputation had preceded him to Mewar and the Maharana readily took him into his favour.³ Col. Tod gives altogether a different reason for the estrangement of Zalim Singh from Maharao Guman Singh. He says that Zalim

1. V.V. p 1550-1551.

2. Tawarikh ek Jhalawad p. 7

3. V.V. p. 1419, 1460, 1461.

Singh and Maharao were co-lovers of a Rajput woman. The ruler could not tolerate that his path of love be crossed by his servant and therefore dismissed Zalim Singh from service. ¹ This story is incredible because Maharao Guman Singh did not marry any girl after Zalim Singh had left Kota. Besides, Guman Singh was about fifty years old while Zalim Singh was only twenty-two. A man of fifty is not usually capable of any impetuous or uncontrollable passion for a girl. The story therefore, does not deserve any consideration or examination, specially because no story in this respect has come down either through bards or popular tradition. The reasons given above are very probable.

Zalim Singh in Mewar

A man of Zalim Singh's status and ability could not bear the humiliating treatment which Maharao Guman Singh had meted out to him. Leaving his family at Nanta, Zalim Singh, therefore left Kota in the middle of 1765 and reached Mewar. ²

This was the most opportune time for an ambitious young enterpriser like Zalim Singh to seek career in Mewar. Maharana Jagat Singh had accepted the Maratha alliance in 1736 and since then the affairs of the state had been getting from bad to worse. After Jagat Singh's death in 1751 there were three Maharanas in twenty one years and one of them was only of ten years of age when he ascended the throne. The ruler being too young and inexperienced, the nobles of the state had become very powerful and wanted to wield administrative powers themselves. This brought several factions in existence and the Maharana was constantly in difficulty as to which faction's support he should seek. The first two Maharanas during this period were only boys uninterested in administration but the third one, Ari Singh was an impetuous

1. Tod. Vol. II p. 1332.

2. Tawarikh Ek Raj Jhalawadr by Indramal Oswal p. 6,

and self willed young man, incorrigible and oblivious to all sam advice. This antagonized the leading nobles further, and a powerful faction was formed to design deliverance from his rule of tyranny.

Ari Singh was a younger brother of the late Maharana, to whom a posthumous son was born soon after his death. The baby was brought up in concealment, but when he was about seven years he died of small-pox.¹ The nobles who wanted to set up a rival against Ari Singh substituted one Ratan Sing for the deceased boy. The faction consisted of all the leading nobles of Mewar except the jagirdars of Bijolia, Badnore, Salumber, Ghanerao and Amet.² To worsen the situation Malhar Rao Holkar threatened to raid Mewar. The tribute due to him was in arrears. He demanded a prompt payment of 60 lacs of rupees which the Maharana could not pay because his treasury was empty.³ Malhar Rao devastated Rampura, Burha, Jarada, Kahajera etc., which belonged to Mewar. The treasury of Udaipur had already been depleted by the insistent demands of the Marathas and mismanagement and extravagance during the twenty five years of the boy Maharanas' rule. It was impossible to pay the heavy arrears which were demanded by Malhar Rao Holkar and, therefore, a deputation of nobles was sent by the Maharana to negotiate terms of payment. The amount, after a lot of haggling during which the negotiations seemed to break down, was fixed at the enormous figure of fifty one lacs. Mewar was totally unable to pay this heavy amount, but the deputation, by a skilful handling of the situation, avoided the impending disaster of Holkar's raid.

1. a. V.B. p. 1550.

b. Ojha Udaipur Ka Itihas p. 654.

2. a. V.B. p. 1550.

b. Ojha, Udaipur Rajy ka Itihas p. 650

3. V.B. p. 1546.

Zalim Singh Favoured by the Maharana

The disaffected faction of nobles rallied round the supposititious Maharana Ratan Singh¹ and resolved to invite Mahadaji Sendhia to help their cause.² The price of the military aid was fixed at rupees one lac and fifty thousand - an appalling sum no doubt but it was a counsel of desperation. Thus the internal and external conditions of Mewar were highly deplorable and the state was facing a triple crisis - political, administrative and financial. It was at this juncture that Jhala Zalim Singh appeared on the scene, and when the chief of Sadri introduced him to Maharana Ari Singh the latter received him with all honour and affection.³ Zalim Singh had acquired name and fame by his gallant dash at the battle of Bhatwara and also by his judicious handling of the situation which arose as a result of the Maratha exactions from the Kota state. Besides, he had matrimonial alliance with the ruling family of Kota and was a scion of the Jhala family of Halvad. With such background of respectability, Maharana Ari Singh took the exiled adventurer readily into his favour.⁴ For his maintenance a small jagir of Chita Khera and Kirpapur was bestowed upon him and he was married to the daughter of the cousin of the Maharana, who proclaimed from the balcony of his palace to all those assembled there that Zalim Singh would now rule the state on his behalf.⁵ This, however, seems to be too big a boast of the chronicler of Jhalawad. The Maharana was no doubt in difficulty but he could not so readily surrender all his powers to an adventurer who, though respectable, was still a stranger. What is true is this that, though as a return for these favours

1. V.V. p. 1550

2. Tawarikh ek Jhalawad page 76

3. V.B. p. 1550

4. Ojha Udaipur Rajy ka Itihas p. 650

5. Hamaro Hukam Zalim Singhji par chha, Zalim Singhji ko hukam sari riyasat par chha : Tawarikh ek Jhalawad page 7

Zalim Singh would have proved a great asset to the Maharana, but due to the impetuosity of his temper, the latter refused to be guided by his young but sound counsel. Zalim Singh was however loyally and sincerely responsive to the favours which the Maharana had showered on him during days of his suspense and uncertainty.

Zalim Singh Wins Over Some Sardars

The preparations for dethroning the Maharana and installing Ratan Singh on the Gadi with the military help of Scindhia had been completed by the powerful faction of the nobles and a devastating raid by the rapacious leader was impending.¹ The immediate duty of Zalim Singh, therefore, was to counter act the disloyal faction. This he did in two ways. He appealed to the wavering elements in the nobility to help the Maharana's cause and break the faction and thus maintain like good Rajputs the traditional loyalty to the ruling house. The clouds of war were thundering and threatening on the borders of Mewar where the factious nobles had all assembled to invite the Maratha rapacity and plunder to settle the domestic issue. There was not much time left for Zalim Singh to negotiate terms with or appeal to noble sentiments of the rebellious Sardars, but Zalim Singh gained a marvelous success in winning over Umed Singh of Shahpura to the Maharana's cause. This was a great encouragement to the other wavering elements and in a short time a respectable force collected to meet the impending danger. Zalim Singh got military aid in favour of the Maharana from two military officers of Peshwa, Daula Mian and Raghuji Paigya.² Zalim Singh's appeal went to the heart of Rajput soldiers and sardars and the forces marched to the bank of the Sipra where Scindhia was encamped with large troops to give battle.

1, V B. p 1553

2- V.B.p. 1555-1556

Ojha, Udaipur, Rajy ka Itihas p. 651

Zalim Singh Taken Prisoner in Battle of Sipra

The battle commenced on the 13th December, 1769.¹ The Maharana's troops made a furious charge against the Marathas. Immediately there was a confusion in the Maratha ranks, where the troops were scattered and a panic was created. The Marathas left the field and were pursued by the victorious Rajputs to the very gates of Ujjain. It was a decisive victory for the Maharana, and credit for it would have gone to Zalim Singh, who would have been hailed as a hero of a second great victory, but the situation took an unfavorable turn with a tragic rapidity. In the flush of their joy for victory the Maharana's troops gave up all sense of decency and proportion and gave themselves up to rapine and plunder in villages they came across and converted themselves into a rabble and began to pass their time in festivities and merriments.² This was observed and reported to the sagacious Sindhia who took advantage of the imprudent abandon of the Rajputs and, putting his forces in order, dashed back with a hurricane speed and fought with such fury and plan that the Rajputs were routed; and Zalim Singh, who had been slightly wounded and whose horse had been killed, was found lying on the field in a helpless state, and was picked up by the Marathas and taken prisoner.³ He was treated with care and honour befitting his social status. But it was a very humiliating experience for Zalim Singh, worse than the one he felt when he was expelled from Kota by Maharao Guman Singh. But he was a man of great resourcefulness. He had numerous friends among the Marathas and had easy access and

1. V.B. p. 1556

Ojha Udaipur, Rajy ka Itihas p. 652

2. a. V.V. p. 1557

b. Ojha-History of Udaipur. p. 652, 653.

3. a. Ojha-History of Udaipur, p. 652

b. V.V. p. 1553

approach to the greatest of them. In the Sindhia's camp itself there was one Ambaji Ingolia, who came to his rescue and offered a ransom of Rs. 60,000/- to Sindhia for releasing Zalim Singh.¹

Sindhia followed up his success, advanced to Udaipur, and besieged it. There was a great panic among the residents, and the close councillors of Maharana advised him to leave the capital and seek shelter in Mandsore. In this crisis, Agar Chand proved of immense help to the Maharana. He had the experience of having served the last two Maharanas with loyalty and honesty, but could not pull on well with Ari Singh on account of the latter's uncontrollable will and obstinacy. In this critical situation, however, the Maharana implored him to manage the situation and save the state from extinction. He resumed the duties of an administrator on promise of non-interference and was successful in building defences of the city, in reconciling the discontented Sinchi forces and in supplying rations to the starving soldiers. The supporters of the Maharana defended the city with such remarkable valour and gallantry and with such sincerity and devotion that Madhav Rao Sindhia started negotiations for peace. Rather than lose all, and return discomfitted, he satisfied himself with an indemnity of Rs. 6,00,000/- and a small provision for Ratan Singh. An agreement being concluded, Sindhia left Udaipur.²

Zalim Singh ransomed by Ambaji Ingolia

Zalim Singh was ransomed by Ambaji Ingolia, a Maratha Sardar and jagirdar of Chhabara Guger in the neighbourhood of the state of Kota, and an old intimate friend of Zalim Singh. After he was captured and taken prisoner, Zalim Singh was kept in the fort of Guger till 1769. The story of his release

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1. (a) V.B. p. 1556-1559.
 (b) V.B. p. 3738-3749.
 (c) Bhim Vilas, p. 28-29.
 2. (a) Ojha History of Udaipur. p. 655.657.
 (b) V.V. p. 1992 and 1669.

is very interesting. Ambaji's wife was an adopted sister of Mahadji Sindhia. She was instructed by Ambaji to request Sindhia, at some opportune time, to release Zalim Singh. The same year she went to Sindhia for the rakhi ceremony and, in lieu of a present in return, requested that Zalim Singh might be released. The Sindhia granted the request and Zalim Singh was set free,¹ in 1769. This story seems to be more probable than the one of simple ransom. As a jagirdar of Sindhia, the Sardar could not have the audacity of offering a ransom for Zalim Singh, who had fought against Sindhia. Whatever be the means and methods of Zalim Singh's release, there is no doubt that in 1769 he was free to resume his career.

Zalim Singh recalled by Maharao Gumansingh

At about this time, Maharao Guman Singh of Kota was suffering from a fell disease and was very anxious about the future of his state. He had three sons and feared that there might be a struggle for the throne after him. Besides, since the departure of Zalim Singh, the affairs of the state were going from bad to worse. On the expulsion of Zalim Singh, Akhai Ram Pancholi and Jaskaran had been removed from the ministerships and replaced by Thakur Bhopat Singh, maternal uncle of the ruler and a Bhankrote Rajput.² But he could not control the situation, and the administration of the state, and the menace of the Marathas were becoming serious problems. Therefore, he also was removed from the office and Maharaja Swarup Singh, a cousin of the Maharao was appointed a minister. Even then the situation continued to deteriorate and the necessity was being increasingly felt for a man of real sagacity and resourcefulness. The ministership was offered to Lalaji Balal, the vakil of the Marathas, stationed at Kota. He was a talented and gifted man

1. Tawarikha Ek Jhalawar p. 8-9.

2 (a) Thakur Lakshmandan's manuscript history of Kota (Hindi.)

(b) Tod. Vol. II p. 1382.

but he expressed his inability to accept the office and suggested that the situation could be brought under control by a man like Zalim Singh, and that the Maharao would be well advised to recall and reinstate him with all honours. Forced by the circumstances, the Maharao had to eat the humble pie, and accepted Ballal's advice. Lalaji Ballal himself was sent with a letter, requesting Zalim Singh to return and help the Maharao. Zalim Singh was passing the days of his exile and disgrace at his small jagir of Kirpapur and Chitakhara in Mewar, where Lalaji Ballal met him. After a good deal of hesitation and on solemn assurances of honorable treatment and reinstatement, on behalf of the Maharao, Zalim Singh agreed to return to Kota.¹ He came back in 1770 and was immediately reinstated as the Faujdar of Kota with full powers. A part of the palace was made over to him by the Maharao, for his residence. This part of the palace is known as "Jhala ki Haweli" even now.² The people of Kota assembled in front of the palace gate and Maharao Guman Singh announced that in future he would pass orders to Zalim Singh, who would implement and convey them to the state.² Immediately on his reinstatement, Zalim Singh addressed letters to the various Maratha sardars, apprizing them of his reappointment as minister or faujdar with all the honours and privileges that he was enjoying before his expulsion from Kota. The letter addressed to Ahalya Bai Holkar is preserved in the Holkar Archives. It is couched in the most flattering terms, Ahalya Bai Holkar being addressed as Mateshwari and Tirathswarup etc.

On his return, Zalim Singh bought off the Maratha raiders, hovering on the borders of Kota, and put the affairs of the state in order. Guman Singh now felt that the affairs of his state and his family were safe in the hands of Zalim Singh. He had been

1. Thakur Lakshmandan's manuscript history of Kota (Hindi.)

2. Tawarikh El Jhalawar, p. 9.

3. Tawarikh El Jhalawar, p. 9.

suffering for some time from a serious disease, and felt that his end was nigh.

Zalim Singh's hand in the death of Guman Singh

Popular gossip had it that the immediate cause of Guman Singh's death was Zalim Singh. Of course, he had been ailing for a long time, but Zalim Singh hastened his end. In fact, they had never been perfectly reconciled. Faced by insoluble difficulties, Guman Singh had recalled Zalim Singh, but he knew that the young and ambitious Jhala was not amenable to authority, possessed an indomitable nature and, therefore, he would eclipse his master. As there was no way out for Guman Singh, he had to make the best of the bad bargain. On the other hand, Zalim Singh had not forgotten the insult and humiliation to which he had been subjected. In response to Maharao's request he had returned, because he had no prospects before him of a good career else-where, but he wore the scars of the old wounds and wanted to remove all vestige of any possible obstacle to his insatiable ambition. It is said that he caused a poisoned bandage to be applied to the ulcers from which Guman Singh was suffering; as a result of which his whole body was poisoned, and he expired.¹

Umed Singh entrusted to Zalim Singh

Zalim Singh had made himself very important and powerful by successfully bribing off the troops of Sindhia and Holkar from the territory of Kota. The laurels he had won in Bhatwara were still quite fresh in the memory of those who counted in the Kota state, and now, by tactfully handling the new situation, he gathered fresh glamour. In fact, he was the man of destiny. Guman Singh was for all practical purposes a titular head. It was Zalim Singh, who was wielding the real power, and who could steer the ship of the state safely in that stormy situation.

1. Vansha Bhaskar pp. 3316-3317,

Under these circumstances, Guman Singh, whether he liked it or not, had to depend on Zalim Singh for the continued safety of his boy successor, Umed Singh, and for the successful conduct of the administration of his state. While dying, he, therefore, called Zalim Singh to his bedside and entrusted his ten year old son, Umed Singh to his care and enjoined upon him the responsibility of ruling the state on his behalf till he came of age. Guman Singh expired in 1771; and Zalim Singh became immediately the de facto ruler of Kota, which position he did not relinquish for the next two generations of rulers. He was now personally known to Holkar, Sindhia and several sardars in their camps and also to rulers of Bundi and Jaipur, and enjoyed the status of a jagirdar of Mewar, whereas at Kota he was the regent and guardian of the young ruler.¹ From 1771 onwards, his reputation continued to mount higher and higher and his power became stronger and stronger. During the next 50 years he played a very important part directly in the Kota State and indirectly in the neighbouring states of Rajputana, and with his statemanship and diplomacy, he baffled all those he came in contact with, including even such astute British diplomats as Col. James Tod, who had known Zalim Singh for over twenty years and yet considered him unpredictable.

Zalim Singh removes his rivals.

When Zalim Singh returned from Mewar, Swarup Singh was carrying on the administration of the Kota state and was designated as Musahib Ala. Even on Zalim Singh's restoration to former power and privileges, he continued to be associated with him in the conduct of administration, but Zalim Singh's self-willed disposition and insatiable ambition would not brook any interference with his authority or the slightest limitation of his powers. Their relations began to deteriorate fast and Zalim Singh

1. Kota State Archives of S. 1827.

plotted the end of Swarup Singh. There was no crime which Zalim Singh would not commit. Though Swarup Singh was closely related to the ruling family, he never crossed the path of Zalim Singh's ambition. Zalim Singh wanted to wield unrestricted power in the affairs of the Kota state, and he thought that the surest and the most effective way of getting rid of Swarup Singh was to murder him. Zalim Singh, therefore, took Jaskaran Dhabhai into his confidence. This man was the son of the nurse of Maharao Guman Singh and held a jagir worth about ten thousand. At that time a scandal was in circulation in the city that Jaskaran's sister was rather too intimate with Swarup Singh. Zalim Singh told Jaskaran that it was very cowardly and disgraceful for him to tolerate, with equanimity, an ugly and scandalous situation like it. Jaskaran replied that if he were supported by Zalim Singh, he would put an end to the life of Swarup Singh, with one stroke of his sword on the following day. Nothing could be more welcome to Zalim Singh than an offer like this, and he at once suggested a plan for murdering Swarup Singh.

Jaskaran was told that Swarup Singh would come to the Braj Bilas gardens next day, when Jaskaran should be present, prepared to do him to death. A request was also made to Swarup Singh to come to the same garden next morning where Zalim Singh would also arrive. The following morning, instead of going to the Braj Bilas gardens, Zalim Singh repaired himself to his residence at Nanta, while, as requested, Swarup Singh reached the Braj Bilas gardens in the morning of the third day of Falgun of 1771. Jaskaran received him there respectfully and talked to him in a polite and friendly manner for some time, and then suggested that they had better go up stairs and await Zalim Singh's arrival. The attendants were left below and the two nobles went up. Swarup Singh least suspected that any foul play was intended. Finding that Swarup Singh was all alone, Jaskaran dealt him a sharp stroke of his dagger, and in a second

it was too late for Swarup Singh to retaliate and offer him an effective counter-stroke. However, before breathing his last Swarup Singh struck his sword at the assailant who parried the blow with great dexterity. The sword struck the pillar of a cenotaph on which the marks are still visible.¹ On receiving the information, Zalim Singh galloped at top speed to the place of occurrence and ordered an immediate arrest of the murderer.² After the arrest had been effected, Zalim Singh spoke to him confidentially that openly he would scold him and imprison him, but would not order his execution.³ But in case he divulged the secret, he would be dispatched immediately. Jaskaran gave solemn assurances of keeping the secret at any cost. Zalim Singh, therefore, reprimanded him publicly in the most violent and angry manner, and threw him into prison, and later on externed him from the Kota state. The wretch dragged on a miserable existence in the districts of the Jaipur state, suffering untold hardships and privations, and eventually died without care and treatment in a remote village.

Zalim Singh weakens the Hada Rajputs

There was now none who could share with Zalim Singh the power of administration, or who could be considered even socially his equal. Zalim Singh could not be contented with any thing less than unchallenged supreme position. He had nothing but hostility for those who claimed equality with him. He always found some thing to denounce in every man. If a man was intellectually superior, he would condemn him as socially inferior, and if a man were socially superior, he would run

1. (i) V.B, p. 3817.

(ii) Tod.

(iii) Thakur Lakshmandan's manuscript history of Kota. (Hindi.)

2. V.B, p. 3818.

3. Ibid

him down as intellectually inferior. Now there was only one element which could be considered his remote rival. They were the Hada jagirdars who were closely or remotely related to the rulling house. The most important among them was Devi Singh of Bambulia, who had a jagir worth Rs. 60,000/-. He was closely related to the deceased Swarup Singh and, therefore, he vowed to avenge his cousin's death. Zalim Singh was apprized of it, and he ordered troops to march against Aton, the seat of Devi Singh. Umed Singh, though young, did not like forces being mobilized against his own kith and kin and, therefore, ordered the commanding officer not to move.¹ This was just the beginning of Zalim Singh's despotic career and, therefore, he desisted from flouting the order of the young ruler, and did not force his own command of mobilization of the state troops against Devi Singh. But Zalim Singh was not the man who could be quiet, and let a plot develop against him and, therefore, invited a fresh adventurer, popularly known as Musa Madat, to march against Devi Singh.² The adventurer came with his trained and disciplined troops and was also assisted by some forces of the Kota state. The fort of Aton was besieged but the French adventurer, Major Pulleite had no heavy artillery with him and, therefore, the fort walls could not be breached. The siege dragged on for several months and the besieged began to feel the shortage of sustenance and became exhausted. Devi Singh, therefore, left the fort one day under cover of darkness, and wandered here and there in search of shelter, but no body offered it.³ Eventually he sought refuge with Madho Rao Sindhia, who kept him under his shelter, and fixed an amount for his maintenance. Thus Devi Singh died a

1. Office of the Kotri Jagirdar

2. (i) Ibid.

(ii) V.B. 3822

3. Ibid.

hopeless and helpless man, survived by his lucky son, Zorawar Singh who was then twenty one years old. To him Mahadji Sindhia was very sympathetic. The Sindhia performed what is known as the matami ceremony; that is he recognized Zorawar Singh as a lawful successor of his father and a lawful jagirdar of Aton, and strongly advised Zalim Singh to restore his jagir to him. The Sindhia's demands were irresistible for Zalim Singh, who just to please and placate the Maratha chief conferred a jagir worth Rs. 15,000/- a year on Zorawar Singh, with Bambulia as its chief town.¹ Zorawar Singh, therefore, succeeded to the diminished honours and privileges of his father and began his career in an atmosphere, surcharged with suspicion and distrust. The fate of Swarup Singh's successors was not better. He was not survived by any son but only by two brothers, Amar Singh and Dalel Singh, who, to avenge their brother's death rose against Zalim Singh, and began to create disturbance and disorder in the districts. Zalim Singh summoned them on solemn promise of safety and provided Amar Singh with the jagir of Khedli, a small village worth hardly about Rs. 2000/- a year which the descendants of Amar Singh had been enjoying continuously till the Kota state integrated with Rajasthan. The other brother, that is Dalel Singh was given the jagir of Niani which was hardly worth Rs. 1,500/- a year. The jagirdar of Sorkhand was also treated with equal severity, perhaps because he was designing a move against Zalim Singh. In fact, there was hardly a Hada jagirdar in the Kota State, who was well-disposed towards Zalim Singh. It was natural for them to entertain feelings of hostility towards the adventurer whom they considered an upstart, and who had rendered their real master, Umed Singh powerless; and was ruling in his name, fulfilling his own selfish ends. Chain Singh of Sorkhand, like other Hada jagirdars of Kota, was loyal to the Maharao, which, in the eyes of Zalim Singh, was an unpardonable offence. He did not mind if just a formal and

1, Kota State Archives of s. 1888.
Office of KorJagirdari

outward courtesy were extended to the Maharao; but the real allegiance and loyalty were *his* due and should be rendered unto *him*. Chain Singh's big jagir was, therefore, forcibly resumed and he was reduced to the position of a holder of one village. The fourth jagir which was similarly dealt with was that of Palaitha, where the jagirdar was a cousin of the Maharao, but a mere boy. Zalim Singh wanted to take him under his guardianship, to which his mother would not agree and, therefore, the small fort of Palaitha was besieged and bombarded. The small and leaderless garrison submitted without much fighting and all available property within the fort was seized by Zalim Singh's men. The inventory of the property seized includes even such petty articles as small ropes which were used for tying the cows with. The drastic action Zalim Singh took against the above four jagirdars frightened the remaining nobles who were less powerful than they. A large number of them left the state to seek better shelter elsewhere. As homeless wanderers, they went from place to place but they were no where welcomed, and passed their days in great misery and difficulty.

The conquest of Shahabad

Zalim Singh further enhanced his power and prestige by seizing the fort of Shahabad. This fort was originally included in the principality of Narwar, where one Madho Singh was ruling. Madho Rao Sindhia seized the state from him and turned him into a homeless exile. In this state of helplessness he was helped by two Deccanee soldiers of fortune – one Khande Rao and the other Nawal Singh, who would not let Sindhia have any rest. Madho Rao Sindhia pacified them by providing them with a jagir of Rs. 2,00,000/- in which the fort of Shahabad was also included. In 1790 when Zalim Singh was at the height of his power, the fort of Shahabad was defended by a small garrison under Megh Singh, a priest of Madho Rao. Zalim Singh knew that the fort was remote from Narwar; and, being poorly defended by a garrison of only 300 soldiers, 200 of whom had been alienated by

Zalim Singh by an offer of bribe. was easily assailable. Zalim Singh obtained a formal permission from Maharao Umed Singh, and sent troops to seize the fort which was reduced without difficulty because there was hardly any resistance. The fort fell in December 1779.¹ Umed Singh was pleased with the tact and strategy of Zalim and offered Shahabad to him as his personal jagir, but the clever Jhala declined to accept it, saying that he was just a petty servant of His Highness and could not possess a jagir and a big fort like that of Shahbad.

Zalim Singh as guardian of Umedsingh

Guided by the practical sense of reality, though, of course, most reluctantly, Guman Singh, while he lay dying, had entrusted his ten year old son Umed Singh to Jhala Zalim Singh and earnestly enjoined upon him to take care of the child as guardian, and safeguard all his interests.² Zalim Singh assured the dying ruler that he would do it, and literally kept his promise. From 1770 to 1819 when Umed Singh died at the age of sixty-two, Zalim Singh continued to treat him as a ruler, but the real power was exercised by himself and, for all practical purposes, Umed Singh was a mere titular head of the state.³ In all administrative affairs major and minor, he pretended to obtain instructions or orders from Umed Singh, but it was an open secret to the people of Kota as also to the people and princes outside, that the orders and decisions used to emanate really from Zalim Singh. So perfect and complete was his control that in the words of Col. Tod who had known him intimately for a number of years, even the air could not enter the state of Kota without this Machiavellie's permission.⁴ But Zalim Singh acted the part of formality with such minute and unscrutinizable skill that even those who were very

1. (a) Kota State Archives of s. 1836

(b) Tawarikh Ek Jhalawad p. 14-15

2. Tod.

3. V.B. pp. 3940, 3951

4. Tod.

close to him could not perceive his design through it. Whenever any case was submitted to him for decision or a request was presented for sanction, he invariably used to say that he would submit it to Shriji Hazur (His Highness) and would try to know his pleasure, though the pleasure was always his.

How Zalim Singh behaved

Whenever a deputation from a state or the representatives of the Maratha court arrived at Kota for discussion on certain matters, Zalim Singh would invariably decline to receive them unless they had been first presented to Maharao Umed Singh. He would personally introduce them to the ruler, who, after usual courtesies, always used to repeat the formula that he would let Zalim Singh know his views and they *may* discuss the matter with him. After this drama used to be over, Zalim Singh played his part as a de-facto ruler of the state, though at every turn of the sentence he would say "such and such are the views of his Highness", and so on and so forth. Under the overbearing care and control of Zalim Singh, Umed Singh could not develop any initiative and, therefore, never asserted as a ruler; rather he always stood in awe of the wily old man, and contented himself with the formal respect which was, of course, punctiliously paid to him. The internal administration and the external affairs of the state were managed by Zalim Singh, entirely on his own initiative. He had not the least difficulty in obtaining the formal approval of Umed Singh to any step he wanted to take. Col. Tod has related a story which is illustrative of Zalim Singh's obsequiously respectful behaviour towards his ruler when it did not interfere with the real power he wanted to wield, but which kept his royal ward in good humour. Once Zalim Singh happened to be in the temple of Braj Nathji inside the palace for *darshan*. At that very time the two sons of Umed Singh also came there for the same purpose. As required by the mode of worship which their father followed, the two princes had to prostrate themselves before the idol of the diety. The floor of the temple

had been just washed and was wet. Seeing what the royal children were going to do, Zalim Singh spread his valuable Kashmir shawl on the floor, and, in the most subservient manner, entreated the children to use it, which of course, they did. What followed was a masterly stroke of Zalim Singh's technique of fulsome flattery. When the princes had left, the priest made a gesture to a servant to take the shawl, thinking that Zalim Singh would not use it. But the latter snatched it most proudly from the hands of the servant, and, in all reverence, put it on his own head, observing that the shawl had now really become an object of pride and honour for him, and would go down to his posterity as a mark of family prestige.

Shivpur, Shahbad etc.

Zalim Singh's conquest of Shahabad has already been mentioned. He also wanted to annex Shivpur Burooda situated beyond Ramgarh to the north north-east of the Kota state, and for this purpose he sent troops, but the chief put up a gallant defence and the town could not be reduced. Zalim Singh also did not care to pursue it, because Sheopur lay beyond river Parbati which is a perennial river and the road also is not easily negotiable. In dealing with Begun, a big fief of Mewar, Zalim Singh was very generous and pleased his ruler by helping its chief. The territory of Begun was invaded by the forces of Sindhia and the fort was besieged by them. A very strong and brave resistance was offered but the besiegers did not relax their efforts and the besieged began to feel the shortage of provisions inside the fort. Reduced to such straits, the chief of Begun most frantically entreated the Maharao of Kota for help. Umed Singh had married the daughter of the chief and hence the latter could approach him for help. Zalim Singh was not at all interested in relieving Begun, and probably also realized that no military aid from Kota could be effective at Begun against the Sindhia. As

Maharao Umed Singh was very anxious to help his relative, he spoke about it to Zalim Singh, who started negotiations with Sindhia and bought him off, paying an amount of Rs 6,00,000/-. It was evidently a great strain on the meagre finances of Kota but Zalim Singh paid the money out of his anxiety to keep his master pleased. This is an evidence of Zalim Singh's practical wisdom and tactfulness. By this act he lost nothing but enhanced the confidence Umed Singh had in him.¹

Zalim Singh controls the Pindaries

Early in the first decade of the 19th century, a new menace appeared on the southern and eastern borders of the Kota state. The Pindaries began to plunder and devastate the Kotah state parganas, adjoining the territories of the Holkar and the Sindhia. The Pindaries were predatory hordes produced by the anarchy of the times. They were too numerous and organized to be easily subjugated by any power. The Holkar and the Sindhia diverted them from their states, to the neighbouring territories of the Kota state, and afforded them a sort of protection when they returned to their camps in the Maratha territories. Finding that the hordes could not be effectively checked by mobilizing troops, Zalim Singh adopted a policy of conciliation and settled about 20 important leaders of these hordes in the different parts of the Kota state, namely in the southern and eastern districts. The chief leader of the Pindaries was Mir Khan, with whom Zalim Singh established friendly relations and made suitable arrangements for establishing his head quarters at the town of Sher Garh situated on the bank of the Parwan in the Kota state. It was a strongly fortified town and the deep long pool of the river was an additional defence. Here Mir Khan used to pass some days of rest after his plundering raids, and here his wives and other women used to stay in comfort and safety in a house built by Zalim Singh, specially for him.

1. V.B. p, 3932

When Mir Khan used to be absent for his aids, and his family was in any difficulty, Zalim Singh used to look after them and used to help them, and, when necessary, would even provide them money for maintenance. At the same time, Zalim Singh kept a careful watch on the movements and activities of the Pindaries in the Kota State, and also kept himself posted with most up-to date information regarding the activities in Mir Khan's camp. When the Pindaries became unruly, he sent large troops for suppressing them. They operated once for over two months and returned when the plunderers had been completely subjugated. The brunt of the Pindari raids was felt no where so much as in Kota. The state was a pivot of the Maratha policy in Rajasthan. So was it the main target of the Pindari activities both from the states of Gwalior and Indore. The policy of kicks and kisses Zalim Singh pursued in respect of these hordes was greatly successful, and speaks volumes of his tact and diplomacy. There was no danger which the cool-headedness of Zalim Singh could not avert.¹

Zalim Singh's successful diplomacy with the East India Company

Zalim Singh's first contact with the East India Company took place when Lord Lake organized a general campaign against Jaswant Rao Holkar in 1803. The astute general marched large troops with fifty pieces of artillery under Col. Monsoon from Delhi by way of Alwar, Jaipur, Devli, Kota and Mukandara. At that time Holkar was encamped in the district of Rampura Bhanpura. Col. Monsoon was given military aid by the rajas of Jaipur and Bundi, but Zalim Singh showed the greatest enthusiasm in espousing the cause of the rising power. Lord Lake had addressed him a letter requesting for lending troops to Monsoon to fight against Holkar. This was most welcome to

1. (a) Tawarikh Ek Jhalawar pp. 29-30.

(b) Kota state Archives s. 1856 Basta No. 82 Bhandar No. 21/2 Topkhana.

Zalim Singh. At that time the most influential and popular nobles in the Kota state were Ap Amar Singh of Koela and his namesake of Palaitha. Zalim Singh was most anxious to weaken these two chiefs and, if possible, to finish them off. Appearing to be most sincerely responsive to Lake's request, he lent some troops to Monsoon and entrusted the command to the two above nobles. When Monsoon crossed the Mukandara pass, he learnt that Holkar was marching at the head of a tremendous force with hurricane speed to meet him. Col. Monsoon, therefore, decided to turn back, but left the Kota forces behind to defend his retreat.¹ An advance column of Holkar's army under Mahommed Bungas came in grip with the Kota forces and a small detachment of the British troops under captain Lucan, and cut them to pieces. Amar Singh of Palaitha was killed in action, and his namesake of Koela, who was badly wounded, died on his way home. Lucan fell fighting on the battlefield near Pipalia about two miles from the railway station of Garoth on the Kota Nagda railway. A simple cenotaph marks the place where Amar Singh was cremated, while not very far from it stands the simple memorial of the gallant Lucan.²

When the panic and retreating Monsoon reached back Kota and requested Zalim Singh to assist his retreat, the latter had already cooled down. His two rivals were already gone, and the retreat of Monsoon indicated that the British East India Company was not going to become an all India power very soon. The fact that Zalim Singh had lent his troops to Monsoon could not be kept a secret from Jaswanth Rao. To maintain friendship with Holkar, Zalim Singh, therefore, refused to render any further assistance to Monsoon. Not only this, he further, observed that he did not want to spoil the morale of his troops by letting the fleeing forces mix with them. He did not even supply boats to them to cross the Chambal. This

1. Thakur Lakshmandan's manuscript history of Kota. (Hiudi.)

2. Kota Kajya Ka Itishas p. II, pp. 491-493,

change in his attitude, however, did not save Zalim Singh from the wrath of Jaswant Rao Holkar.

Umed Singh was by temperament a non-assertive and submissive sort of man. From boyhood till his death he stood in awe of Zalim Singh and, therefore, there never occurred a chance of any conflict with him. In the treaty with the East India Company, Zalim Singh got a secret clause inserted according to which the entire administration of the Kota state was vested in him and his successors. This rendered Maharao Umed Singh and his heirs for ever the titular rulers of Kota. Now for all practical purposes, Zalim Singh was the real ruler, and the power was to descend in succession to his heirs. Thus Zalim Singh had reached the pinnacle of power in 1818 when the treaty was signed.

CHAPTER IV

ZALIM SINGH'S RELATIONS WITH KOTA MAHARAOS

Maharao Guman Singh submitted to Zalim Singh's dictatorial behaviour out of political necessity. He himself was an incompetent ruler. The clique of the nobles and officers had put everything in disorder in the state and the pressure of the Marathas had become irresistible and alarming. Hence it was that Guman Singh was forced to recall Zalim Singh and reinstate him as faujdar with full powers. Guman Singh also knew that Zalim Singh brooked no opposition to any interference in his exercise of power; and the succeeding Maharao was a mere child of ten years and no arrangement, therefore, was possible according to which Umed Singh's ruling power could be guaranteed or Zalim Singh's dictatorial power could be restricted. The only alternative left to Guman Singh was to make a sentimental appeal to the moral sense of Zalim Singh. This he did by entrusting his succeeding son to the care of Zalim Singh, appealing to him that he would take care of the child and the affairs of the state as the faithful regent of the state. Zalim Singh performed both the duties quite literally and faithfully in his own way. Umed Singh continued to be his veritable ward till he died an old man of over sixty, and the affairs of the Kota state were managed by Zalim Singh with remarkable ability during the period when the Maratha rapacity was relentless and ceaseless. When Zalim Singh secured a separate and secret clause to the treaty between Kota and the East India Company and got the administration of the state vested in

him and his successors in perpetuity. Umed Singh did not much care for it. He had ever submitted to the respectful dictation of Zalim Singh and it made no difference if the fait accompli was now recognized by the new political power.¹ In fact Zalim Singh had ever been recognized as a defacto ruler by the Marathas and what the Britishers did was to respect the political legacy they had inherited. Umed Singh, therefore, took the whole affair in good humour and was indifferent to the secret clause perpetuating Zalim Singh's authority. Besides, Umed Singh was now near his end. Age and infirmity were weighing him down. He expired in 1819 just a year after the treaty had been ratified.

Zalim Singh and Maharao Umed Singh's Marriage.

Maharao Umed Singh was married to the grand daughter of Rao Umed Singh of Begum (Mewar). Umed Singh was at that time just eleven years of age and his bride about seven years old. Zalim Singh's sister was married to Maharao Guman Singh and hence he was maternal uncle (Mama) to Umed Singh. He was, therefore, invited to act as a guardian of the young ruler in respect of the marriage. Zalim Singh had selected the girl and settled the match. Now he was at the head of the marriage party in which were included the Marath notables like Ambajis Inglia and Lalaji Ballal. Zalim Singh performed all the social and religious ceremonies which Guman Singh, if he were alive, would have done. In this respect it is interesting to note that the total expenditure on marriage amounted to about ninety thousand rupees. When the marriage party returned home Zalim Singh gave a grand dinner at Rangbadi, a beautiful garden about three miles to the south of the city of Kota. The bride paid her respects to the ladies of Zalim Singh's family and gave them gold mohars as gifts.² Zalim Singh showed full outward respect not only to Umed Singh or to his mothers but also to all the other

1. V.B. p. 3951

2. Kota State Archives of 1813. Do Varquish Basta No 57. Bhandar No. 1

royal ladies in the palace. Some of them used to tie rakhi on his wrist and received rich presents. When simple formality and outward courtsey was concerned Zalim Singh left nothing undone and took care of the minutest necessary detail.

Zalim Singh Respectful to Umedsingh.

Though all ruling powers centred exclusively in the hands of Zalim Singh, and Umed Singh had become a mere figure head, a titular ruler in the strict sense of the word, yet the clever administrator continued to be respectful to the ruler. When Umed Singh was blessed with the first son, named Kishore Singh, in 1781; Zalim Singh celebrated the occasion with great eclat, and spent lavishly from his own pocket. Rich presents were offered to Umed Singh and all the members of his family, close or remote, both gents and ladies, and there were festivities and merri-makings for days together. Almost all the palace servants received gifts from Zalim Singh, who did every thing to impress the people that he was really happy on the birth of the royal successor.¹ Important religious rites were also performed by Zalim Singh himself to avert the evil influence of stars on Kishore Singh. When the second prince Vishnu Singh was born to Umed Singh, Zalim Singh celebrated the occasion again with befitting pomp and show and presented rich presents to the ruler and the child.²

Immediately after Umed Singh was seated on the throne, Zalim Singh took him round the state for what was called the Tika Daur. While accompanying the Maharao, Zalim Singh treated him with all formal respect and thus heightened the ruler's prestige as well as his own in the estimation of the people. Receptions were arranged for Umed Singh at numerous places where nazars were offered by the prominent persons, Zalim Singh all along behaving as though he was a mere servant of the Maharao

1. Kota State Archives, Basta No. 93 of S. 1840 Ashadh Sudi Purnima

2. Kota State Archives, Basta No. 8 S. 1841

and in every detail of administration received instructions from him. But there was hardly any body so blind as would not see, and all those who possessed any sense knew that Zalim Singh's behaviour was a mere blind to dupe the people. Who would believe that from a boy of ten years the astute politician and the hero of several battles that Zalim Singh was would receive instructions to carry on administration. However, Zalim Singh continued to flatter the Maharao and befool the people. In the villages of his own jagir where also Zalim Singh took Umed Singh in tour, he was specially respectful to the Maharao and played the drama so well that the people all admired him but at the same time they must have all seen through the political farce. ¹

Umed Singh's Visit to Nanta.

Maharao Umed Singh had hardly any important affair to transact. The programme of his movements used to be prepared by Zalim Singh and every detail used to be fixed by him. Umed Singh was just made to go through them. Nanta, the residence of Zalim Singh used to be visited by Umed Singh now and then. This used to provide opportunities to Zalim Singh and the ladies of his family to spoil the child ruler with insulsome flattery and obsequious respectfulness. There are entries of the details of several such visits during the rule of Maharao Umed Singh. The following description of one of such visits given in the Kota Archives will suffice to illustrate the nature of all other such occasions. "On the tenth day of the first half of the month of Jeth in Samvat 1829 His Highness visited Nanta and immediately on his arrival Mamaji (Maternal uncle that is Zalim Singh) presented one gold mohar as a nazar. Zalim Singh's wife also performed Nyochhawar with Rs. 10/- All the ladies of Zalim Singh's family offered nazars. Zalim Singh's mother performed Nyochhawar with one gold mohar. Zalim Singh's aunt also did

1. Kota State Archives Pasta No. 57 Bhandar I Do Varqui papers S. 1830.

the same. The other relations of Zalim Singh also offered nazars. His Highness gave as a gift to Mamaji one pair of diamond-set bracelets which Maharao Guman Singhji used to put on. He also presented two mohars to Zalim Singh's mother. When His Highness was leaving, Mamaji presented a beautiful horse to him. His Highness took leave of him after touching his feet. His Highness stayed at Nanta for 11 days.¹ "As a mark of respect the expenses of Zalim Singh's planquin used to be a charge on the 'tan kharch' or privy purse of the Maharao.

His son treated equal to the prince

When Kishore Singh began his first lessons and the janco ceremony (sacred thread) was performed, Zalim Singh seated his son Maaho Singh also by the side of the prince, which implied, though he did not express it in words, that they both stood on enqal footing. They were entrusted to the same teacher though neither of them made any headmay in education beyond simple literacy.²

When Gordhan Singh, son of Zalim Singh, from a muslim mistress of Arandkhera, near Kota, was married, Maharao Umed Singh was invited to grace the occasion at Nanta. Socially this could not be regarded as a grand occasion and there is hardly any mention in the Archives of any important state of Rajputana of any ruler responding to the invitation, but Umed Singh had no choice and had to accede to the irresistible invitation of his Mama. Not only this, but lavish gifts were given in form of robes and cash and ornaments to Zalim Singh, his two sons Madho Singh and Gordhan Das, his nephews Jagat Singh and Fateh Singh, the two wives of Zalim Singh, his mother; Madho Singh's wife, Zalim Singh's two daughters and to all the male and female servants in

1. Kota State Archives of S. 1830. Do Varqui in Basta No. 57 (Bhandar No. 1)

2. Kota Archives S. 1846, Bastr No. 3

Zalim Singh's establishment On the various occasions of the marriage Zalim Singh was honoured with lavish and rich gifts. Presents were made even by the second and third prince.¹

Covering Letters of Umed Singh.

The domestic and external policy of the Kota state was entirely in the hands of Zalim Singh and no body could dare interfere with him. Umed Singh was not permitted to acquire any initiative in administration and possessed no natural go or drive to direct the external policy, However, Zalim Singh made it a point to obtain formal approval of Umed Singh for every detail. Whenever he addressed a letter to any Maratha chief or a Rajput ruler he would secure a covering letter from Umed Singh. Probably Umed Singh never knew the details of the correspondance and even if he knew, he had not the strength to change a single word in Zalim Singh's dictated draft. The form of the covering letters invariably used to be as follows:—

"I am sending my trusted man, so and so with a letter. I trust you and the family are keeping good health. There are certain important matters to which your attention is invited, You will know the details from Mamaji Raja Zalim Singh(i's letter."²

Zalim Singh's attempt to end Umed Singh's Life.

In 1791 Umed Singh came to know that Zalim Singh was contriving his death. He had engaged some Tantrik Brahmans who were secretly performing certain magical rites known as "maran and uchchatan." Umed Singh set his own spies at work and they confirmed that the news was correct. Umed Singh had never interfered in Zalim Singh's dictatorial use of power and was, therefore, much shocked that inspite of his most accommodating attitude, Zalim Singh wanted to get rid of him. Zalim Singh

1, Kota State Archives of S. 1861, Basta No. 33 in Raj Mahal Ka Bhandar.

2. Kota State Archives of S. 1845, Telceques in Basta No. 1 in Bhandar No 3

was not at Kota at that time and, therefore, Umed Singh addressed him a letter as follows:—

“I have come to know that some tantrik Brahamans are performing ‘maran mantra’ against me by your order. This is highly improper of you. You were not expected to do such things secretly against me. I have always considered you as my elder. It does not therefore, behove you to behave like this against me. Now I have a keen desire to go on a pilgrimage to Nathdwara. Therefore, please arrange for my journey to that place. If my being a ruler stands in the way of my undertaking a pilgrimage, I am prepared even to abdicate.”¹

It seems that Zalim Singh sent no reply to this letter and on his return might have explained away the ‘maran’ episode. Zalim Singh did not favour the pilgrimage idea because he apprehended that under cover of going on pilgrimage Umed Singh might contact either the Marathas or the Maharana of Udaipur and might try to overthrow him. But Umed Singh was incapable of any such manoeuvre. At this time Zalim Singh was outside Kota and his son Madho Singh was a child of hardly nine years’ old. If Umed Singh had possessed any drive this was an opportunity to recover his power and to overthrow Zalim Singh. Rather than rely on himself he wanted some external support which was not possible against Zalim Singh. However, Umed Singh continued his efforts in this direction, though in a most cautious manner. That he never gave up the idea of going outside and enlist some strong support is evident from the following letter which he addressed to Zalim Singh when the latter was in Mewar in connection with Daulat Rao Sindhia’s campaign there.²

“I have received your letter and am apprised of all news by going through it thoroughly. What is the reason of your long stay at Udaipur? When you are there, I wonder, if it is nece-

1. Ibid.

2. Kota State Archives papers in the Bhandar of Raj Mahal of S. 1949

ssary for me also to come over. Just find out a good excuse and take leave of Daulat Raoji Sindhia and return here. If this be not possible I may come over there and speak to Daulat Raoji to let you return. You wrote to me that after satisfying Sindhia you will soon return to Kota but you have not yet come. Now please return immediately and manage the affairs of Kota. Having gone to Mewar you have busied yourself too much with the matters there. If our state survives, it will help us all. I, therefore, propose to come to Mewar and secure permission for you to return here. Our administration is suffering and you are busy in Mewar. Please see that our state survives; only then we can be saved. The Sindhia is powerful, greedy and selfish. If you will stay on with him and there will be no body here to took after the administration, it is likely that somebody may invade the state. For the present Daulat Raoji Sindhia will proceed to Ujjain. Therefore, please take permission and return. When he returns to Mewar from Ujjain, we will both discuss together and take necessary action. If Daulat Raoji Sindhia intends to stay on in Mewar and does not propose to return to Ujjain, then please send a draft letter from me to him. I shall send it to him and obtain necessary permission for you. You please come over here and I shall stay with Sindhia. I have written to you several times before and asked you to arrange my visit to Sindhia. Formerly also business at Delhi used to detain the rulers there. Sometimes they used to stay continuously as long as twelve years. Please do what is in the interest of the Kota State.”¹

From the above letter it is clear that Maharao Umed Singh wanted to move out from Kota and contact Daulat Rao Sindhia and perhaps the Maharana of Udaipur in, order to emancipate himself from Zalim Singh's tutelege. Zalim Singh's letter to which the above letter is a reply has not yet been traced, but from the above

1. Kota State Archives of S. 1862. Khabaran ka basta of bari Kacheri of Rajmabal.

letter we can infer that Zalim Singh wanted Umed Singh not to move out and the reason he might have given was that the ruler must stay in his own state. The concluding portion of Umed Singh's letter indicates his anxiety to contact Daulat Rao but the letter is full of caution and carefulness. It is, however, evident that Umed Singh was under Zalim Singh's domination and the latter also wanted to get rid of him in order to insure Madho Singh's future. This is how we can explain Zalim Singh's secretly resorting to the employment of magical rites for ending Umed Singh's life. Below the veil of formalities and mutual flattering courtesies, such were the relations of Zalim Singh and Umed Singh.

Zalim Singh and Kishore Singh

At the time of Umed Singh's death Zalim Singh was 80 years old and Kishore Singh 38. The latter had never liked Zalim Singh's over-bearing behaviour and chafed under it more than his father. Temperamentally Kishore Singh was quite different from Umed Singh. He did not want to live under the guardianship of Zalim Singh. He wanted to rule. Besides, Zalim Singh had now become infirm and old, and had practically lost his eyesight. Kishore Singh thought that now was the time to throw out Zalim Singh. He did not know that Zalim Singh had a strong support of the British East India Company. Though he had become a physical wreck, the company's prop was keeping him erect. But Kishore Singh was blinded by his ambition. He was determined to recover the ruling powers which Zalim Singh had, in a way, usurped from his two ancestors. His youthfulness, his temperament and his advisers as also the political circumstances would not let Kishore Singh submit to over half a century old dictatorial role of Zalim Singh.

The Political circumstances

When Kishore Singh ascended the throne, peace and order had been established almost all over India and the Britishers had

become an unquestionably supreme power. Rajputana had been in rack and ruin during the last three quarters of a century due to the incessant Maratha raids and the mutual clanish jealousies and warfare of the Rajput chiefs. The Pindaris had completed the chaos by the end of the eighteenth century. As the boundaries of Kota touched the territories of Holkar in the south and that of the Sindhia in the east, the rulers of Kota had to bear the brunt of the Maratha aggressions most. The Pindari pressure also was the greatest in this state. Only a man of Zalim Singh's tact and resourcefulness could save the state from complete annihilation; and neither Maharao Guman Singh nor Maharao Umed Singh could do without him. But now the circumstances were quite different. The Sindhia and the Holkar both had been humbled and had accepted the British alliance. The Pindaris had been crushed. The mutual relations of the Rajput states had been brought under the control of the British East India Company. Kishore Singh could now get on without Zalim Singh and, therefore, nursed the ambition of possessing real ruling powers. In a letter to the Governor-General, Sir Charles Metcalf wrote that Kishore Singh would not have conceived the idea of ruling himself if the Pindari menace had not been removed and the Maratha raids had not stopped.¹

Kishore Singh's Advisers

Kishore Singh had two younger brothers, Bishan Singh, thirty-four years of age, and Prithi Singh still younger by three years. The latter was deeply devoted to Kishore Singh and was more anxious even than his eldest brother to seize power from Zalim Singh. He was impetuous, brave and wreckless. He had the dash of a Rajput but lacked forethought and possessed no sound political sense. In fact neither Kishore Singh nor Prithi Singh had received education worth the name and did not understand what the supremacy of the Britishers meant and what their gratitude for Zalim Singh's services in the Pindari war implied.

1. Tod Vol, ii

Zalim Singh had two sons, Madho Singh and Gordhan Das. Madho Singh was forty years of age and Gordhan Das was a little younger. When Zalim Singh lost his eyesight and felt that his end was not distant, he made Madho Singh the faujdar of Kota and the young man began to behave as a de-facto ruler of the state. It was this attitude, more than anything else, which Kishore Singh most resented. He had no particular objection to the continuance of Zalim Singh's regime because it was apparent that his days were numbered, but Madho Singh's appointment indicated that the Jhala authority was going to be perpetual. Madho Singh's younger brother was more devoted to Kishore Singh than to his own brother and for this he had reasons. He had been once put under custody by Madho Singh and since then he had transferred his loyalty to Kishore Singh. He was sincere, clever and tactful and possessed some power of leadership. He openly espoused the cause of Kishore Singh against Madho Singh. Like Prithi Singh he also advised Kishore Singh to be a ruler and not a mere puppet in the hands of an equally young man like Madho Singh.

Kishore Singh's mistake

Umed Singh did not resent Zalim Singh's authority because, when he was seated on the throne, he was a mere boy of ten and grew under the protecting care of Zalim Singh, who did not allow him to develop any initiative or ambition and hence it was only late in his life that Umed Singh felt a little urge for emancipation from Zalim Singh's yoke. It was not so in case of Kishore Singh. He and Madho Singh both were of the same age, and they had been educated together and had grown up together.

Madho Singh possessed none of the tact and reserve which characterized his clever father. He was a young man, lacking in prudence and foresightedness. He started behaving towards Kishore Singh, if not as his superior, at least as his equal, while Zalim Singh, when man of forty used to treat the ten year old Umed Singh with all marks of respect. This was the reason which

created a gulf between Kishore Singh and Madho Singh, and, if the British East India Company had not interfered, Madho Singh could very easily be overthrown. But Kishore Singh also was equally imprudent. Zalim Singh was now eighty years old and had not many years to live. If Kishore Singh had patiently waited for a few years more, the situation would have been easier for him. After Zalim Singh's death the company could not have cared to support Madho Singh. But it was not possible for them to withdraw support from Zalim Singh, who had been their faithful and loyal ally. But Kishore Singh precipitated, evidently under the advice of his impetuous brother and disgruntled friend, and, therefore, suffered.

Kishore Singh determined to regain power

With the advice of Prithi Singh and Gordhan Das, Maharao Kishore Singh was determined to seize power from Madho Singh. His two advisers were staying with him in the palace and constant consultations were going on how to get rid of Madho Singh. Zalim Singh was alive to the danger of these developments and considered Prithi Singh and Gordhandas's association with the Maharao fraught with grave possibilities. He, therefore, ordered the siege of the palace in order to get hold of the two young men.¹ But the Maharao was prepared to go to the extremes. The siege continued for several days and such rations as were already inside or could be smuggled in from outside were nearly exhausted. Under these circumstances Maharao Kishore Singh sallied forth from the fort with a small force of about 500 cavalry and an equal number of infantry and encamped at Rangbadi, about four miles south of Kota.² Little knowing that the arbitration by force would be of no avail in the changed political conditions of the country, Kishore Singh began

1. Thakur Lakshman Dan's manuscript History of Kota State in Hindi.

2 Ibid

Kota State Archives of S. 1777 to 1894, Basta No. 14 Bhandar No. 5 Ritakz-raval papers.

hurried consultation with Prithi Singh and Gordhan Das and his other loyal nobles for a battle with Zalim Singh and Madho Singh. When he was thus busy Col. Tod reached his camp, gave him a sane advice and brought him back to the palace. When Kishore Singh was in Rangbadi, Zalim Singh was consulted by Col. Tod as to the steps to be taken but the old wily man gave his characteristic reply "I always aspire for the protection and support of my master's feet I shall ever be his servant. I will prefer to end the remaining years of my life in prayer and worship at Nathdwara rather than be disloyal to my lord and thus blacken my face".¹

Zalim Singh's exuberance of loyalty

Kishore Singh had already seated himself on the ancestral throne but Zalim Singh was anxious to placate him by manifestation of loyalty and respect at some function. After Kishore Singh's return from Rangbadi a grand coronation darbar was, therefore, organized. This was also in keeping with the Britishers' policy of holding the investiture darbar where the ruler's succession was formally recognized. The political agent with his own hand put the tilak on Kishore Singh's fore-head and presented khilats to him and Zalim Singh. The Maharao and Zalim both offered him nazar.² On this occasion Zalim Singh was out-wardly so respectful to Maharao Kishore Singh and so enthusiastically participated in the function and looked after every detail of the ceremony so carefully and punctiliously that it brought about a sort of reconciliation between him and Kishore Singh, and when Zalim Singh rode through the streets of Kota he was hailed as a benefactor of the state and the people believed that the differences between the ruler and the minister had been permanently removed. This was, however, a temporary phase. Kishore Singh was not the man who would be satisfied by mere shadow. He was keen for substance.

1. Stratton—A short History of Kota as quoted in Kota Rajya ka Itihaas P. II p 561.

2. Thakur Lakshman Das's manuscript History of Kota State in Hindi
Tod—Rajasthan—Personal Narrative.

Gordhan Das expelled

Even more than before, Kishore Singh began to perfect plans for an open armed conflict with Zalim Singh in consultation with his chief advisers—Prithi Singh and Gordhan Das. In this he had the open sympathy of his kith and kin, the Hada jagirdars of Kota. A shrewd man like Zalim Singh could not remain ignorant of such secret designs even in his extremely advanced age. He, therefore, advised Kishore Singh to part with Gordhan Das and send him away from the state. Most reluctantly Kishore Singh agreed to do so but not before Gordhan Das had been supplied with Rs. 30,000/- in cash.¹

Gordhan Das continued to plan against Zalimsingh

Gordhandas was given the choice of residing either at Delhi or Prayag, and he selected Delhi because it was near Kota. He was granted an adequate pension. He lived under an unrestrictive watch by British cavalymen. After some time he took permission to attend a marriage at Jhabua and this revived all sorts of rumours and gossips at Kota. Kishore Singh was in continuous secret correspondence with Gordhan Das. Now his presence at Jhabua, only about 125 miles from, Kota alerted the already too alert Zalim Singh, who stopped the egress of palace people. Even then Kishore Singh continued to be in touch with his advisers outside the palace. Zalim Singh, therefore, ordered the bombardment of the palace and closed the gates of the city to prevent outside help entering it. The firing of the guns continued till midnight. During this confusion and violence, Saif Ali a Muslim risaldar deserted Madho Singh and joined Kishore Singh. By mid-night the situation became very grave for Kishore Singh. He, therefore, crossed the Chambal and went to Bundi with a retinue of three hundred persons.² His brother Prithi Singh and his son, Ram

1. (i) Thakur Lakshman Das's manuscript History of Kota State in Hindi.

(ii) V. B. pp. 4021-22.

2. (i) Thakur Lakshman Das's manuscript History of Kota

(ii) Tod Rajasthan

(iii) V. B. 4021-22

Singh were with him. His retinue included the loyal Muslim risaldar Saif Ali.

Zalim Singh's diplomatic drama

Zalim Singh was encamped outside in a tent. Hearing that Kishore Singh had left, he came to the palace, posted his men at all key positions and then went to the Zanani Deori and sent word to Kishore Singh's wife, "I feel like thrusting a dagger in my own stomach. His Highness has gone and I am now left without any guidance in administration. The scoundrels are responsible for misguiding His Highness and for advising him to go away."¹ He then most respectfully placed Kishore Singh's sandals on the throne, saluted them in all humility, and said that he would receive inspiration from them in conducting the administration of the State.² For persons of intelligence it was too thint a veil but the people in general must have been deceived.

Kishore Singh's preparation for action against Zalim Singh

Kishore Singh was accorded right royal and cordial welcome by Raoraja Bishan Singh of Bundi and was treated as an honourable guest.³ Inspite of all efforts of Zalim Singh to prevent Gordhandas from coming to Bundi, he did arrive and joined Kishore Singh with his troops. Zalim Singh conveyed to the Raoraja of Bundi that Kishore Singh could be treated and kept as a guest but he should not be permitted to recruit forces for an armed action and that if he did so, it would be considered as an unfriendly act on behalf of Bundi.⁴ The political agent also supported the attitude of Zalim Singh. Maharao Kishore Singh and Gordhandas, therefore, left Bundi and reached Delhi, where the Maharao tried to persuade the

1. V. B. p. 4100

Archives of the Thikana Kotri

2. Ibid

3. V. B. p. 4024-4025

4. Archives Thikana Kotri

Tod. Part. II

political department to withdraw or modify the secret clause of the treaty but Sir Charles Metcalf was adamant and the Maharao, therefore, left Bundi and finally made up his mind to have an armed contest with Zalim Singh to regain his ruling powers.¹ In the early monsoon of 1821 Kishore Singh reached the borders of the Kota State. When he crossed the Chambal his troops numbered hardly 3,000. Entering his state, he invited all his kith and kin to join him. His slogan was "Hadas with the Hada and Jhalas with the Jhala". There was a tremendous response to his invitation, Rich and poor, almost all the able-bodied Hadas of Kota joined him and even Balwant Singh, a Jagirdar of Bundi, came with his hundred horsemen to fight on his behalf.² Kishore Singh had already crossed the Chambal, and now, having crossed Kali Sindh was encamped near Mangrol, fifty miles from Kota. Zalim Singh knew that the Hadas were joining Kishore Singh in large numbers and it was not safe if he was allowed to march more inside the state. He, therefore, faced Kishore Singh near Mangrol.

Negotiation For Peace

Before the first shot was fired, Kishore Singh was told that he could occupy his ancestral throne with all honour, and Zalim Singh's services would be available to him in perpetuity and that he would be well advised to avoid bloodshed. Kishore Singh repeated his demand for the fulfilment of the terms of the treaty made with East India Company and deletion of the secret clause and added that he had no objection to the continuance of Zalim Singh as faujdar but that he could not get on well together with Madho Singh. Therefore, some jagir might be assigned to him for his maintenance and he should be kept away from Kota. Madho Singh's son, however, could stay at Kota and succeed Zalim Singh but definitely on condition that he would serve under the ruler. These conditions were not acceptable to Zalim Singh or to the Political Agent who accompanied Zalim Singh to the battlefield. Maharao Kishore

1. Tod. Vol. II

2. Ibid

Singh was told that they would wait for half an hour for a gesture of peace and if he continued to be adamant, the action would commence. Even at this juncture Zalim Singh's mind was not definitely known. He said to Col. Tod, "Sahib Bahadur, I do not know why God is displeased with me. I fear my face is going to be blackened in this old age. The rascals have misguided my lord. Even the clothes on my body are doing treachery to me.¹

The Battle of Mangrol

Zalim Singh's forces consisted of five platoons, 14 guns and 10 squadrons. On the left of his forces were posted two platoons of the East India Company, nine squadrons and one sebandi. Five hundred yards behind stood in reserve three platoons, 18 guns and 4 Risalas. Zalim Singh was with this force. The chief commander was Col. Ridge. Col Tod had taken his position to the left of Zalim Singh's reserve. Maharao Kishore Singh had 8,000 cavalry but not a single gun. Zalim Singh's artillery fired the first shot and then began the furious charge by Kishore Singh's cavalry. The terrific fire of the guns caused havoc in Kishore Singh's ranks. But so fiercely did the Hada Rajputs fight that of the three British Officers who participated in the fight, two, Lt. Clerk and Lt. Reed, were killed in action and Col. [Ridge had a very narrow escape. In fact for sometime he was taken as dead. The casualties on both sides were heavy but Kishore Singh's forces fought more bravely. His brother, Prithi Singh was mortally wounded and was found lying in a field of maize by captain Skinner's cavalry man. Kishore Singh retreated and left the field.²

Zalim Singh suspected of foul play

Prithi Singh was brought in a doli to Zalim Singh's camp. Col. Tod says that he was treated with all care but expired the following

1. Ibid

Thakur Lakshmandan's manuscript History of Kota state in Hindi

2. V. B. p. 4100-2

Tod, Vol. II

day. A rumour, however spread round about Mangrol that a physician of Sheopur was asked by Zalim Singh to apply poisoned bandages to the wounds of Prithi Singh, which hastened his death. This could not, of course, be in the knowledge of Col. Tod. He would not have tolerated such foulness. Zalim Singh might have told him that the best treatment was being given and Tod had little knowledge of the indigenous system of medicine and Zalim Singh surpassed all in acting secretly. Col. Tod, therefore, must have thought that everything was all right. People near about Mangrol still tell the story of Zalim Singh's poisoned bandages.

Zalim Singh reacts the diplomatic drama

Kishore Singh crossed the Parbati and reached Baroda. (Gwalior State) Here he took most pathetic leave of his surviving comrades and Hada nobles who were feeling extremely despondent about the future of their lord as also of theirs. Kishore Singh went here and there and ultimately reached Nathdwara. The only relative who shared Kishore Singh's troubles and hardships was Ram Singh, his nephew, son of Prithi Singh. Kishore Singh's retinue consisted of hardly three hundred men. Zalim Singh on return to Kota expressed his deep grief and sorrow at Kishore Singh's absence. Again he placed his sandals on the throne and while conducting the administration of the state as faujdar, as he called himself, he pretended to receive inspiration from them.¹

Maharao Kishore Singh reconciled to Zalim Singh

At Nathdwara Maharana Bhim Singh came to see Kishore Singh. He had married Maharao Umed Singh's daughter and his son Amar Singh had married Vishnu Singh's daughter. Hence Bhim Singh was very closely related to Kishore Singh and was sympathetically interested in him.² Through the good offices of Maharana Bhim Singh an agreement was made at Nathdwara between Kishore

1. Thakur Lakshmandan's manuscript History of Kota State in Hindi,

2. V. B. p. 4020

Singh and Madho Singh in the monsoon of 1822, nine months after the battle of Mangrol. Col. Tod also was present on the occasion. According to this the secret clause was nominally modified and certain marks of royalty were definitely defined. Kishore Singh accepted the agreement and returned to Kota in the following mid-winter. At four miles from the capital Zalim Singh accorded a grand reception to Kishore Singh. There was a great public enthusiasm on his return which indicated how popular the ruler was among his people. Kishore Singh was placed on the throne with marks of great respect and loyalty. Zalim Singh offered him the usual present of 15 gold mohars and began to effect reconciliation between the ruler and his son. One day there was a cordial meeting between Kishore Singh and Madho Singh, at which the former embraced the latter. Zalim Singh felt extremely elated at this development and behaved as if he felt deeply grieved at his past deeds and said to Madho Singh "It is the result of your misdeeds and sins that in my old age I have to feel this shame and my lord had to suffer such hardships."¹

Zalim Singh celebrates his grandson's marriage

Zalim Singh's grandson Madan Singh was now 15 years old. His marriage with the daughter of the chief of Rampura was celebrated two months after Maharao Kishore Singh's return from Nathdwarā. Feasts and festivities on a grand scale were arranged. On this occasion Zalim Singh had very good excuse of inviting and flattering Kishore Singh. Along with him Mr. Wilkinson the Political Agent was also invited. Both were accommodated in his baronial residence of Nanta. Zalim Singh offered lavish and rich presents consisting of diamond necklaces and bracelets etc. to Kishore Singh. He was equally lavish towards the Political Agent as well. Presents consisting of gold mohars and 678 rich robes were made to all the male and female members of the ruling family, close or distant. Cash and clothes

1. a. Kotā Rajya Ka Itihas Part II p. 597-80

b. Archives of Kotri

were also given to all the palace officials and servants, high and low, according to their status. Zalim Singh behaved towards Kishore Singh with utmost respectfulness, and in fact, left nothing undone to please and placate him.¹ The Maharao responded to Zalim Singh's invitation with befitting generosity. He stayed with him for three days and gave gifts of the total value of Rs. 1497/0 consisting, of 11 male robes and 28 female robes. This created an atmosphere of at least apparent cordiality and had very healthy effect on the public. People thought that all misunderstanding between the Maharao and Zalim Singh had been removed and the administrative machine would now move on well and smoothly. The Political Agent had no clear insight in the character of Zalim Singh, who had proved too deep and unpredictable, even for such an astute and shrewd politician as Col. Tod, Wilkinson thought that an atmosphere of mutual understanding had been established and everything was all right.

Zalim Singh tours the state.

The marriage festivities and the desirable atmosphere created by them were followed up by Zalim Singh by an extensive tour of the state. During the nine months when Maharao Kishore Singh resided at Nathdwara, Zalim Singh had become extremely unpopular in the state and the administration had deplorably deteriorated. To restore confidence among the people, Zalim Singh toured the state to proclaim personally that His Highness had returned from Nathdwara and had retaken him into his favour and everything was all right at the capital. Zalim Singh was totally blind and completely broken down by age but his greed for power was yet as insatiable as ever. He had now only a couple of months more to live. He expired in 1823. Thus closed a career of over 60 years' ceaseless strife, continuous manoeuvring, deep intrigues and remarkable self restraint.

1 Kota State Archives of S. 1690 Lakshmiji ka Bhandar, Jhalan ka Jhara ka Qagaz

CHAPTER V

ZALIM SINGH AND THE MARATHAS

Zalim Singh's glimpse of Maratha methods

During his childhood Zalim Singh stayed with his maternal uncle, the Shaktawat chief of hangarmau in Mewar. He was the posthumous son of his father, Kanwar Prithi Singh, and his mother lived with her brother, where the boy Zalim Singh was brought up. When a grown up boy, he came to Kota and lived under the care of his grand father, Madan Singh. From his signatures it is clear that Zalim Singh received hardly any literary education but he must have been a boy of pre cautious intelligence, and at the age of eight years, when he came to Kota, he must have been able to follow the trend of relations between the Kota state and the Marathas. His grand father Madan Singh was then the faujdar of Kota. When Zalim Singh was hardly twelve years' old, Madan Singh had to face a serious trouble by the Marathas. It was the siege of Kota for over two months in which jayaji Appa Sindhia lost his arm, and an indemnity of three lacs was imposed upon Kota. Madan Singh most reluctantly agreed to pay but never made the actual payment.¹ This was Zalim Singh's first glimpse of the Marathas and their ways of dealing with the Rajput states. Being a boy of uncommon intelligence and from what his grand father might have told him about the discussions which were held, Zalim Singh must have formed even at that tender age a correct estimate of the character of the Maratha chiefs. His grand father died in 1758 and was succeeded by his brother Himat Singh, who adopted Zalim Singh as his son. Himat

1. Thakur Lakshman Dan's manuscript History of the Kota state in Hindi

Singh had to deal with the Maratha sardars in respect of a variety of problems from which Zalim Singh, being in a formative period of his youth, must have acquired an intimate knowledge of the ways and methods of dealing with them.

Zalim Singh's first contact with the marthas

When Zalim Singh became faujdar (1759), the Marathas had received a set back in the Punjab which had been twice overrun by Ahmad Shah Abdali, but otherwise their sway was undisputed and the Muslim and Hindu powers were all under terror of their raids. To begin with, Zalim Singh was the second man in the Kota state. The main responsibility was that of Akhai Ram Pancholi, who was the Musahib-i-Ala. However, Zalim Singh used to be associated with the Pancholi in all the dealings with the Marathas. Immediately after he became the faujdar, a tax was imposed on the jagirdars to make payment of tribute and other demands of the Marathas.¹ Malhar Rao Holkar raided the small fort of Suket in the south of Kota. Troops were sent from Kota to help the garrison and in this connection an expenditure of Rs. 8,000/- was incurred.² To safeguard against the incursions of Holkar, the fort of Gagrion was strongly garrisoned³ and the city walls of Kishorpura and Paigah were repaired.⁴ There were huge arrears of tribute and war indemnities payable to the Marathas. In 1756 when Maharao Ajit Singh was seated on the throne the total amount of arrears was fixed by Himat Singh Jhala and the Maratha chiefs at the huge figure of Rs. 56,00,000/-. Akhey Ram Pancholi and Zalim Singh had to face the difficult problem of paying this colossal amount. The income of the Kota state at that time was about Rs. 40,00,000/- Between 1756 and 1759 Kota state paid to the Marathas an amount of Rs. 27,90,000/- and it was settled in 1760 that the remaining

1, Kota state Archives of s, 1815. Basta No. 57

2. Ibid,

3, Ibid

4, Kota state Archives of s, 1816 Basta 58

amount of Rs 28,00,000/- would be paid by annual instalments of Rs. 5,00,000/- each. The settlement was made on behalf of the Kota state by Zalim Singh Jhala, Rai Akhai Ram Pancholi and Ram Kishen Pancholi.¹ A sincere effort was made by Zalim Singh and his colleagues to liquidate the arrears by imposing a special tax known as horse-tax on all the citizens of Kota state including the jagirdars. The tax was so called because it was collected to avoid raids by the Maratha horse. From the peasants it was collected at the annual rate of four annas per bigha and from others one rupee per family. In case of jagirdars it was fixed on the basis of their annual income. From nine jagirdars who held one hundred and six villages as jagirs the collection made on this account was twenty thousand which works out roughly at fifteen per cent of the annual income. The method of collection from persons other than peasants was community-wise or sub-community-wise and the patel or head of each² community was made responsible for the collection. Unfortunately the demands and the exactions of the Marathas were incessant and their accounts highly complicated. Early in 1761 the Marathas were paid a nazarana of Rs. 1,52,250/-. In the preceding early monsoon when Malhar Rao Holkar entered the Kota state from Delhi side and threatened to plunder the territory, he was paid an amount of Rs. 51,000/- at the camp of Nimana. Soon after when he entered again from Ujjain side and repeated the same threat, Zalim Singh had to pay an amount of Rs. 13,754/-.³

Zalim Singh got the first opportunity of close diplomatic contact with the Marathas when Kota decided to resist the aggression of the Raja of Jaipur in respect of the Kotries. Akhai Ram Pancholi and Zalim Singh both were anxious to enlist the support of Malhar Rao Holkar in order to counterbalance the superior military strength of Maharaja Madho Singh of Jaipur. For this

1. Kota state Archives of s, 1817 Basta 'Lekh Cantman ko,

2. Kota state Archives of s, 1817 Basta No, 58

3. Kota state Archives of s, 1818 Basta No, 59 "Nal ka bhar Jar",

purpose Akhai Ram Pancholi and Zalim Singh contacted Malhar Rao¹ and settled the terms of his support. Malhar Rao at this time had encamped at Madhkargarh situated in the valley of Mukandra. Mandargarh these days is almost in ruins. Zalim Singh commanded the Kota troops and Malhar Rao Holkar was more or less a spectator and his presence near the battle field served the purpose of only unnerving the Jaipur forces. However, the contact enriched the growing experience of Zalim Singh, the budding soldier, diplomat and administrator. After the victory of Bhatwada Zalim Singh returned to Kotah in triumph with Malhar Rao Holkar. In the reception darbar Malhar Rao Holkar was treated not as a chief guest; and it is a point to note that he received saropav from the Maharao as well from Akhai Ram Pancholi and Zalim Singh. He did not behave on this occasion as a superior authority. Of course, he was paid an amount of Rs. 35,598/-- for his presence near the field of Bhatwada.

Zalim Singh against Mahadaji Sindhia in Mewar.

After taking Zalim Singh in his service, Maharana Ari Singh of Udaipur utilized his diplomatic skill and power of leadership against the Sindhia. The rebel section of the jagirdars of Mewar had secured Mahadji Sindhia's support for Ratna Singh, and as a price for this they had promised to pay him an amount of one crore and twenty-five lacs. All efforts of the Maharana had failed to dissuade Sindhia from fomenting trouble in Mewar simply for the sake of money. He would not even accept a large amount of money just for desisting from espousing the cause of Ratna Singh. Under these circumstances Zalim Singh employed a remarkable counterblast against the Sindhia. In Sindhia's army he had two friends Daula Mian and Raghuji Paygya. They were sympathetic to the Maharana and were under the influence of Zalim Singh. When they knew that Sindhia was actuated only by greed and rejected all offers of peace by the Maharana, they felt much disgusted

1. Kota state Archives of s, 1862 Basta 60, Bhandar 3, Hukmon ki taliken,

at their master's behaviour, and Zalim Singh succeeded in winning them over to Maharana's side. Raghuji joined Mewar with five thousand troops and Daula Mian with three thousand. The next move of Zalim Singh was to enlist the military help of two more military officers of the Peshwa. They were Beharji Takpir and Pandit Raghav Ram. They promised to expel Ratna Singh from Kumbhalmer in return for Rs. 20,00,000/- and signed an agreement to this effect.¹ When all efforts of the Maharana for peace had failed, preparations for an armed action began.

Zalim Singh wounded and captured.

Zalim Singh was one of the commanders of the Maharana's forces. The great strategic blunder which the Mewar commanders made was that they marched to Ujjain to meet the Sindhia, who had every advantage in that region. The battle raged for three days. On the last day the Mewar forces made a furious charge and the Sindhia's troops were routed; after which the Rajputs gave themselves up to plunder and merrymaking. In the meanwhile a reinforcement of 15000 Nagas arrived from Jaipur to help the Sindhia, which changed the whole situation and converted the Mewar victory into a disastrous defeat. Zalim Singh who was seriously wounded was captured and taken to the Sindhia's camp.² (16th January, 1769).

Zalim Singh's loyalty.

Zalim Singh had known the Marathas quite intimately by now. Evidently he did not like their predatory raids. Besides, he was deeply grateful to the Maharana who had accorded him a ready and honourable reception. Zalim Singh, therefore, fought so loyally

1. (a) Mewar Archives (Saraswati Bhawan Museum) 1768.

(b) V.V. pp. 1553.

2. (i) V.V. p. 1553.

(ii) Twarikh Ek Jhalawad p. 8.

(iii) Kota Rajya Ka Itihas Vol. II p. 461.

(iv) V B. p. 3730-49.

(v) A.A.R.

for the Maharana. He was one of the half a dozen chief commanders of Mewar forces and naturally could not have his own way. If the command were entirely in his hands he would have probably employed a different strategy. What is most remarkable is that he won over two important sardars in the Sindhia's camp and they came over to the Maharana with all their troops and fell fighting on behalf of Mewar. The agreement with Baherji Takpir and Pandit Raghoramji was not implemented by them but the fact that it was signed was Zalim Singh's master stroke of diplomatic manoeuvre.

Zalim Singh's release.

Zalim Singh was imprisoned by the Sindhia and was kept in the fort of Gangdhar, an important historical place about eighty-five miles from Jhalawar. There his wounds were dressed and he was provided with all necessary comforts. From his captivity he was released in the winter of 1769 through the good offices of Ambaji Inglia who was a friend and admirer of Zalim Singh.¹

Ambaji Inglia : Zalim Singh's Life Long Friend.

Ambaji Inglia was Sindhia's jagirdar of Chhabra Guger, situated about 65 miles east of Kota and touching the territory of that state. He was a very able military officer in Sindhia's army.² As his jagir lay close to the Kota territory he came in contact with Zalim Singh, who was deeply impressed by his qualities of head and heart. Zalim Singh had just come to power but he was well known in the Maratha camps as the powerful faujdar of Kota and the victor of Bhatwada. He had been hardly in power for a few years when he was dismissed by Maharao Guman Singh but was readily employed by the Maharana of Udaipur. Even then probably Zalim Singh maintained his contact with Inglia who was in Scindhia's camp and who proved a sincere friend to Zalim Singh when the latter was wounded in the battle of Sipra, captured by Sindhia's

1. (i) V.V. p. 1558

2. (i) V.B. p. 3733-49 (ii) Vol. II by Tod.

men and imprisoned in the fort of Gangdhar. Ingliā's wife was a 'rakhibandh' sister of Mahadji Scindhia and through her Ingliā brought pressure of affection on Sindhia for the release of Zalim Singh.¹ Gauri Shanker Ojha says that Ingliā paid sixty thousand rupees to Sindhia as a ransom for Zalim Singh's release but does not quote reference.² The story of Ingliā's wife interceding for Zalim Singh seems to be more probable and is confirmed by a descendant of Ingliā in whose family the story has come down as a tradition. It is not unlikely that Ingliā might have paid the ransom also in addition, after Sindhia had agreed to release Zalim Singh on the request of Ingliā's wife. Zalim Singh never forgot this timely and friendly act and stood ever so deeply indebted to the Maratha chief.

After Zalim Singh had been reinstated at Kota he presented two noble horses to Ingliā as a token of his regard.³ Zalim Singh's wife became a Rakhibandh sister of Ambaji Ingliā to whom presents were sent through Lalaji Ballal.⁴ The relations continued to thicken and Zalim Singh gave to Ingliā a jagir of four prosperous villages of Dhoti, Bapawar, Gulkheri and Dilod. The total annual income of this jagir was Rs. 25,003/-.⁵ Zalim Singh paid a visit to Ambaji Ingliā at Chhabra Guger in 1799. He was accompanied by all the leading jagirdars of Kota, besides a platoon. Ingliā spent Rs. 1,615/- on hospitality.⁶ Ingliā also visited Zalim Singh in 1836. His retinue was not large because he was only a jagirdar and not a faujdar of a state, like Zalim Singh. The latter, therefore, spent only Rs. 500/- on his hospitality. By this time the power of Sindhia had begun to decline because he had accepted the subsidiary alliance of the British

1. Udaipur Rajya ka Itihas Part II, p. 653

2. Kota State Archives of s. 1144 Basta No. 3

3. Kota State Archives of s. 1846 Basta 8.

4. i. Kota State Archives of S. 1847 and 48 Basta No. 6 Bhandar No. 7

ii. Hisab Jagir Udaipur ka

5. Kota State Archives S. 1856 Basta 3, Bhandar No. 1

6. Kota State Archives S. 1863 Basta 5, Bhandar 1. 'Lekhho Canimelo'

East India Company. Probably Ingolia lost his jagir of Chhabra Guger in consequence of the new political arrangements and, therefore, his family shifted to Shergarh (Barsana) in the Kota state and was maintained by Zalim Singh. The expenditure of the family was a charge on the customs department of the Kota State. ¹ Whenever a lady of Ingolia's family moved from and back to Shergarh necessary arrangements of escort used to be made by Zalim Singh. Later on Ambaji Ingolia shifted to Kota where Zalim Singh used to pay him visits at his residence. ² When a grandson was born to Ingolia, Zalim Singh sent suitable presents for the child and two gold hilted swords for Ingolia himself. ³

Zalim Singh And Tarabai

When Zalim Singh returned to Kota on Maharao Guman Singh's invitation he was accommodated in the haveli inside the fort now known as old Jhala Haveli. He had not yet been formally reinstated as faujdar when news came from the eastern districts of the Kota state that Sindhia's forces were marching towards the State. The Maharao had not paid the tribute and indemnity regularly to Sindhia, who was badly in need of money and, therefore, had been threatening the occupation of eastern districts of Kota if the payment were not paid at once. The threat had now materialized. Large troops under the command of Tara Bai were mobilized and Baran, Mangrol, Ramgarh and Relawan, the four important tehsils of Kota were occupied and thanas established there. They raided the districts, damaged the crops and plundered villages which created a grave situation. There was none else in Kota than Zalim Singh who could cope with it. Maharao Guman Singh, therefore, sent Zalim Singh to negotiate with Tarabai. With a large retinue and a cash of R r. 10,000/-Zalim Singh reached Tarabai's camp and obtained access to her by bribing her slave girls. He made a rich present to her con-

1. Ibid.

2. Kota State Archives of S 1861 Basta No. 3 Bhandar No. 1

3. Ibid.

sisting of gold mohars and rich dresses. The lady was very much impressed by Zalim Singh and accepted his promise of paying the arrears in near future, and evacuated the districts. It seems that Zalim Singh was kept in the camp for some time and asked to make good his promises, but the State of Kota was not in a position to make immediate payment. At Kota, Miharao Guman Singh was ailing and felt that his end was near. He, therefore, wanted Zalim Singh by his side. But evidently Zalim Singh had some difficulty in returning to Kota. Guman Singh, therefore, sent an earnest request to Tarabai to permit Zalim Singh to return to Kota. Accordingly she permitted Zalim Singh to go to Kota and gave him a rich robe and a pearl necklace as gift.¹ Zalim Singh's success in effecting the evacuation of the above four districts and his departure from Tarabai's camp with such great honour heightened his prestige at Kota, and Guman Singh felt that his son and state both would be quite safe in the competent hands of the Jhala.

Zalim Singh intimates his reappointment to all the Maratha sardars.

Immediately after his return from Tarabai's camp, Guman Singh reinstated Zalim Singh as the faujdar of Kota with full powers and bestowed upon him all the marks of honour he had been enjoying before he left Kota for Mewar. Zalim Singh communicated the news of his reinstatement to the Peshwa, Sindhia, Ahalyabai Holkar, Panwars and other Marathas notable whom he knew. His removal from the faujdarship had, of course, lowered his prestige at the various Maratha courts and these were the powers which really counted in 1770. Zalim Singh, therefore, lost no time in apprizing all the Maratha sardars of his restoration. From this date onwards Zalim Singh's prestige and influence at all the Maratha courts continued to grow and in the world of the Marathas he enjoyed reputation for shrewdness and diplomacy, and as Kota was the pivot of Maratha diplomacy in Rajputana, Zalim Singh figured very often in Maratha diplomacy in respect of the states of Rajputana and later on in respect of the Pindaries and finally in respect of the British.

1. Tawarikh ek Jhalawar p p. 9-11

Zalim Singh's negotiations with the Marathas in respect of southern parganas.

As the eastern parganas of the Kota state were exposed to the aggressions by the Sindhia, so the southern parganas suffered from the recurring depredations of the Holkar. Bakani, Suket and Kherabad were his chief targets. They touched his territory and his raiding troops could, therefore, very easily descend upon them at any time. The fortitaces of Suket and Bakani were repeatedly besieged by his troops who more than once were repelled by the Kota forces,¹ but Holkar continued his harassing raids. Between 1761-1775 there were a number of raids in these districts. Some of them were simple predatory raids, the soldiers just getting hold of what they could lay their hands on, but a few of them were destructive and devastating to the extreme. Not once, but several times the peasants of these parganas raised their wails to Zalim Singh that not only their other belongings but even their oxen had been forcibly carried away by Holkar's troops to draw his guns.² The peasants of the villages of Bharot, Ganeshpura, Nimana, Borkheri and Alapo were totally ruined and to rehabilitate them Zalim Singh advanced them money to purchase new oxen and necessary grain and other things, and consoled them in every manner. To buy off Tukoji Holkar and Mahadji Sindhia more than two lacs of rupees were paid to them. As the treasury of Kota had already been depleted by the continuous and exacting extortions by the Marathas, it was with extreme difficulty that the Maharao of Kota could find money, as advised by Zalim Singh, to pay to Holkar and Sindhia. In fact the ruler of Kota had to pawn his ancestral jewelry including a few ornaments with which his family deity used to be decorated, in order to borrow an adequate amount from Bhat Nityanand.³ After having suffered enormous loss in men, material and money, Zalim Singh realized that it was not paying to resist Holkar and Sindhia in these parganas. Holkar had

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1815 Basta No. 57.

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1826-1832 Basta No. 3 Bhandar 19.

3. Kota state Archives of s. 1826-32 Basta No. 3 Bhandar 19.

even posted his Kamavisdars in these parganas for the collection of revenue, a certain portion of which used to be given to Yashwant Rao Panwar.¹ Eventually the forts of Suket and Bakani were taken by Tukoji Holkar and an indemnity of Rs. 3,11,000/- was imposed upon Kota for the loss Holkar had sustained in men and material in besieging these forts.² Next year, however, Holkar agreed to adjust against his outstanding demand an amount Rs. 4,92,600/- for a loss and damage (Pai Mali) sustained by the Kota state due to his raids.³ Earlier than this on Zalim Singh's request to reconsider the position, Mahadji Sindhia had also agreed to adjust Rs. 2,50,000/- on the same account⁴

Zalim Singh's arrangement regarding Suket, Bakani etc.

It was Zalim Singh's cherished desire that there should be no reduction of the territory of Kota by the alienation of the parganas of Suket and Bakani. He, therefore, made an arrangement with the Holkar and the Sindhia according to which forts of these two towns were garrisoned by Holkar but the parganas were administered by Zalim Singh and a certain amount of money was annually paid to the Marathas. Sometimes this money was paid regularly but mostly it was in arrears on account of which there used to be a lot of friction. These parganas had practically gone to the Marathas. It was Zalim Singh's resourceful diplomacy which saved their formal alienation.⁵

Zalim Singh and the Sindhias.

Zalim Singh, during his long career of about 60 years as faujdar had to deal first with Mahadji Sindhia and then with his son Daulat Rao Sindhia. When Zalim Singh was put in sole charge of the administration of the Kota state, it was under the heels of the Sindhia. In fact Kota had been assigned as a jagir to the Sindhia

1. Phalake Letter No 20, 21 and 23 Vol. II.

2. Phalake Lekbanka No. 75 of s. 1825 Vol. II

3. Phalake Lekhanka No, 76 of s. 1826 Vol. II

4. Phalake Lekbanka No. 77 Vol. II

5. Kota state Archives of s, 1836 Nal Ka Bhandar,

and the Holkar by the Peshwa and both the Maratha chiefs treated the Maharao of Kota as their feudatory. Lalaji Ballal and his successors were mainly the vakils of Sindhia, though they represented also the other Maratha chiefs of whom the Holkar was as important as the Sindhia. Very often the Sindhia and the Holkar operated together and the tribute payable to the Marathas used to be distributed in the beginning between them. But sometimes the Sindhia raided the Kota territory himself alone and on these occasions and on many others Zalim Singh had to deal only either with Mahadji Sindhia or with Daulat Rao Sindhia. When Zalim Singh started his career Mahadji Sindhia was at the height of his power. He lived to see the decline of the Sindhia house and witnessed the transfer of power from the Sindhia to the East India Company. During this period of rise and decline which spread over more than half a century Zalim Singh suffered considerably at the hands of the Sindhias and repeatedly he had to face a grave situation, but he faced it with great tact and skill and there in lies the greatness of his ability and character.

Sindhia's first letter to Zalim Singh.

Soon after Zalim Singh became Musahib-i-Ala of Kota he received a letter from Mahadji Sindhia in 1765 asking him to pay an amount of Rs. 20,000/- to Pandit Dharma Rao Tamaji on behalf of the Peshwa, and to insure timely and regular payment in future to assign a village worth Rs. 2,000/- to him. Zalim Singh was also asked to satisfy the pandit as to the value of the village.¹ This was fore-taste of what was to follow—the repeated, incessant demands and complicated accounts not to speak of continuous harrassment and interference.

Devastating raids of Sindhia

The first and most devastating raid after Zalim Singh's return

1. Phalke—Lekhanka 250 Vol. I.

was made by the Sindhia in the year 1769 when to turn him back an amount of over 2 lacs had to be paid and to make money available the jewellery of the Maharao's family had to be pawned.¹ The usual strategy of the Maratha chiefs was to threaten, destruction and devastation in case a certain amount was not immediately paid. This amount used to be fixed so high as to be not within the means of Zalim Singh to pay. When immediate payment was not made the threat used to be put into practice and great havoc used to be wrought. On this occasion it was to stop the people from complete annihilation that Zalim Singh obtained money for payment by persuading his ruler to part even with the jewellery of his family diety.²

Raid by Sindhias General.

Balo Rao Ingolia was one of Sindhia's generals. He used to be in charge of raiding forces in order to compell the defaulting chiefs to make payment of tribute and other demands. In 1801 he raided the Kota territory and lifted 6878 heads of cattle which were released by the peasants of the parganas of Rampur and Mandana. The owners were asked by Zalim Singh to identify their cattle in presence of the Kamdar of Lalaji Balal and a nominee of Kota. All the cattle were identified except 1902 which were appropriated half and half by Lalaji Balal and Zalim Singh.³

Sindhia's Troops Enter Kotah Territory.

Sindhia's general Ambaji along with Manuji Kadamb, Mahipat Rao and Ikhuji entered Kota in 1776 from Jhanpayat in Nizamats Barod. Zalim Singh sent his army under Pandit Tantiya, Bakshi Shivilal, (Lalaji Balal's son born of a mistress) and Bakshi Akhai Ram to fight against the forces of the Sindhia's general and to save

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1. Kota state Archives of s, 1826 Basta No. 3 Darbar Guman Singhji ka ton khav ka kagzat Bhandar No. 19.
 2. Kota state Archives s, 1826, Basta No. 3. Maharao Guman Singhji ka Kharach ka kagzat Bhandar No. 19.
 3. Kota state archives of s—1858, Basta No. 37 Topkhana Bhandar No. 21/6.

he state from rack and ruin. Both the armies, well prepared to fight with each other, encamped near the battlefield for more than four months that is from Mah sudi Punam to Jeth Budi Navami, but fortunately for the state the war was averted by the diplomacy of Jhala Zalim Singh. The Kota state spent Rs. 46517. on the mobilization forces.¹ Pandit Mahipat Rao later on deserted Sindhia and sought employment under Zalim Singh Jhala and fought against Sindhia's forces on several occasions.

Sindhia's Raid Averted in 1804--6.

Zalim Singh was informed in 1804 and also in 1806 by his halkaras that Sindhia's forces under Sarje Rao and Mir Khan were encamped near Kesho Rai Ratan about 12 miles from Kotas and that they had plundered and set on fire the villages of Hathi Khera, Marangia, Kheri, Dospuria, Rangpur and Manpura. Some of these villages are situated within the Kota state and others at a distance of 8 to 10 miles from the boundary of the Kota state. In 1804 Daulat Rao Sindhia was encamped at Barondhan situated about 16 miles west of Kota in the territory of Bundi, plundering and ruining the villages round about. Zalim Singh took precautionary measures in alerting the peasantry and other residents of the Kota state parganas, situated in the neighbourhood of Sindhia's camp as well as that of Sarje Rao and Mir Khan and thus the devastation of the neighbouring territory of Kota was averted.²

Sindhia encamped near Dayabhav 1806

In 1806 Sindhia encamped near Dayabhav (Mau Maidana) and the raid and plunder of the Kota territory seemed to be imminent. To prevent it Zalim Singh sent forces under the command of Daulat Khan and Mehrab Khan announcing that it was a hunting excursion. The two forces kept almost facing each other for about five months

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1833 35 Basta No. 61 Bhandar No, Do varki Jama Jama Bandian.

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1861 Basta No, 3/1 Talikon Ka Bhandar No. 3 and Kota state Archives of 1863 Basta No. 5 Bhandar No, 3,

but no action was fought. The forces of Sindhia in face of pretty large troops of Zalim Singh did not dare to cause any devastation or destruction of the Kota territory and withdraw amicably.¹ The Kota forces included the following officers and jagirdars—Khinchi Kalu Ram, Khinchi Nahar Singh, Shaktawat Kuber Singh, Sikh Garib Singh, Jat Ganga Ram, Rajawat Girivar Singh, Bargujar Gordhan, Kachhawaha Ghasiram. Khinchi Deep Singh, Khinchi Moh Singh, Khinchi Padam Singh, Khinchi Pancham Singh. Jadon Vijaya Singh, Ramlot Lakshman Singh, Bakhtawar Singh and Hamir Singh, Jhala Sobhag Singh, Laksbman Singh, Hada Hamir Singh, Umat Roop Singh, Gulab Singh, Jhala Sohan Singh.²

Pandit Lalaji (The vakil of the Sindhia), strangely, enough also sent his sebandi (untrained troops) troops under the general command of Murtaza Khan with the forces of Zalim Singh. They were led by the following officers—Nimaji Shitolia, Babu Rao Moria, Sidhoji Nima'kar, Duduji Bisia, Kushiaji Bisia, Govind Rao Deshmukh, Jaswant Rao Kadam, Bhawani Kanwar, and Parvat Rao Janatap.³

The fact that the Sindhia's vakil at Kota also maintained troops and they were on this occasion with the forces of Zalim Singh is significant. This was due to the remarkable change that had come in the political circumstances. As no action was fought or was intended to be fought, the vakil could offer an excuse, if an explanation were demanded, that his troops accompanied those of Zalim Singh purely for exercise and peace mission. Such duping devices were quite common in the period of anarchy.

Trouble averted

The troops of Sindhia and Zalim Singh kept facing each other for several months and no action was fought. There was hardly a

1. Kota State Archives of s. 1862, Basta No. 5 Nard Gaon Ki Ovari Bhandar No. 1

2. Ibid

3. Ibid

distance of two kosh (4 miles) separating them. A few days after encampment they began to fraternize and tension began to decrease. The Maratha troops must have realized that it would not pay to take to plunder and rapine. This was the impression that Zalim Singh wanted to create. After a few months the raiders realized that it was no use staying on and, therefore, decided to march back. Zalim Singh made a good gesture by bestowing good gifts on the officers of Mir Khan and Sindhia and honoured also the ordinary troopers by suitable gifts. They all departed well pleased and in good humour and thus a major trouble to the parganas was averted by the clever strategy of Zalim Singh.¹

Further Precautions By Zalim Singh

At a distance of about 8 or 9 miles to the west of the Maratha camp near the village of Narayanpur under the fort of Gagron, Zalim Singh had kept a part of his troops under the command of Jan Muhammad Khan in readiness for action, if the necessity arose. These troops included mainly Zalim Singh's artillery and a part of the garrison at Shergarh. They would have been put into action if the Maratha troops had taken to raid and plunder. Thus from military point of view also Zalim Singh was fully prepared to meet the Marathas, but so far as possible he wanted to avert an open fight and succeeded in doing so. When the forces were withdrawn Jan Muhammed Khan was honoured by the gift of a gold necklace, weighing nine and half tolas and costing Rs. 181/5/3.²

Composition of Zalim Singh's forces

It would not be out of place to make an observation on the composition of Zalim Singh's forces. At this time the general officer commanding the state forces was a local Pathan named Dalel Khan. The troops which were marched to Dayabhav were commanded by a Pathan and those of a Sindhia's Vakil also were under a Pathan. Among the officers there were Rajputs of various races namely,

1. Kota State Archives of s. 1863. Basta No 5. Bhandar No. 1 Nandgano Ki Ovari
2. Kota state Archives. Ibid

Sisodias, Kachhawas, Khinchis, Jhalas, Umats etc., including also a Jat and a Sikh. This ruled out any possibility of the officers uniting against Zalim Singh. This shows Zalim Singh's precaution and prudence.

Sindhia and Pindaris both molest Kota

In the first decade of the 19th century the Sindhia and the Pindaris operated together several times in the territory of the Kota state. In the winter of 1806 they encamped between Kota and Rangpur for about two weeks. Zalim Singh sent a letter to Karim Khan with his halkara. The contents of the letter are not given but most probably he was requested to dissuade the Pindaris from operating with Sindhia. The neighbouring parganas were alerted and advised through the halkaras to take all precautionary measures against the imminent eventuality. Daulat Rao Sindhia, therefore, returned disappointed without striking any blow any where.¹

The above account of a few raids of Sindhia is just illustrative of numerous raids of such type which commenced early in the second half of the 18th century and continued till about the time when the Maratha states and Rajput chiefs were all brought under the general control of the East India Company.

Zalim Singh seizes Shahabad

Zalim Singh seized Shahabad in 1779 and in the following year he moved out to tour the state. When he was encamped at Ramgarh he received information that Mahadji Sindhia was in the neighbourhood of Shahabad. Zalim Singh, therefore, hurried to Shahabad to meet the Sindhia. The pargana of Shahabad before Zalim Singh took it was held by a Brahman who paid tribute to Sindhia, who now argued that the tribute in respect of Shahabad was payable by Zalim Singh. Zalim Singh stayed in the Sindhia's camp from May to July

1. Kota state Archives of s, 1863 of Paush Basta No, 5 Nand Gaon Ki Overi Ka Bhandar No 1

and returned to the capital after the monsoon was in full swing.¹ It seems that Zalim Singh had agreed to pay to the Sindhia the tribute due for the fort and pargana of Shahabed. This is evident not from the papers which refer to this visit but from those showing payment to Sindhia for the fort of Shahabad later on.

Zalim Singh pays tribute for Shahabad

After the seizure of Shahabed fort, Zalim Singh had parcelled out the territory under its protection among 18 jagirdars who were made responsible for the payment of tribute due to the Sindhia. The fort of Shahabed was a problem which was never finally settled. Soon after the fort was seized, troops were posted in the pargana to resist the raids of the Sindhia; and Lalaji Balal and Dev Karan Joshi were sent to Gwalior to settle the amount of the tribute. It was decided that Zalim Singh should pay Rs. 30,000/- as annual tribute.²

Zalim Singh's army joins Mahadji Sindhia

It seems that in 1782 Mahadji Sindhia was making elaborate preparations for military operations. Mirza Nafaj Khan, the regent of the Emperor Shah Alam had just died, and a struggle for power among his two slaves (Afrasiyab Khan and Nafaj Quli Khan), grand nephew (Mirza Shafi Khan) and the Mughalia leader (Muhammed Beg Hamadam) had commenced. Under these circumstances the Sindhia was consolidating his military strength for a possible contest, and his camp was somewhere near Asnawar, a village about four miles from the right bank of the river Parvati in the pargana of Ramgadh (now in the Kotah district). Zalim Singh as an ally, was asked by Mahadji to send his army to assist him. Accordingly a big force consisting of nearly 1400 foot and 900 horse and about 2000 followers was despatched under Pandit Lalaji Ballal. Probably Sindhia had directed that Ballal must be the commander in order to

1 Kota State Archives of s. 1837-38 Basta No. 18 Topkhana Ka Kargad Bhnador 20/1.

2. Kota state Archives of s, 1836 as quoted in Kota Rajya Ka Itibas Part, II, p.466

ensure the loyalty of the troops. The strength of the forces can be estimated from the fact that a number of camels were hired from two raibaris for carrying tentage etc. and an amount of Rs. 1420/- was paid as hire. The usual hire for one camels at that time was five annas per day. The camels were required for about six weeks which shows that over one hundred camels were hired from the raibaries; and besides these there were a large number of camels which belonged to Zalim Singh. A large commissariate was necessary because movements of troops in those days were slow and every thing had to be carried on bullocks or camels. With the forces were also the chiefs of the Kotries namely Sanman Singh of Indargarh, Nath Singh of Gainta, Subhagya Singh of Nimola and Zorawar Singh of Khatoli, each with his levy of horse and foot. Altogether they had 200 foot and an equal number of horse. Besides these chiefs, there were Raja Ajab Singh of Khilchipur. Kisore Singh of Pidawa and Jagram Singh Rathod with their levies of horse and foot. Ratna Singh Kanhawat, Sangram Singh of Tirtoda, Bhagat Singh Sonagara, Nirbhya Singh Shaktawat, Samarath Singh of Kakhad. Bharat Singh of Pipalda and Mahipat Singh of Paten also joined with their retinue which amounted to 300 horse and 400 foot. Zalim Singh's own forces included his paiga (cavalry) and paldal (infantry) and platoons of gujars, minas and Ahadis. These platoons were led by Dharma mina, Shahria Mina, Dalu Ahadi and Tulsha Bari. It is worthy of note that Zalim Singh knew how to utilize these people as soldiers and had organized them into regular platoons under their own leaders. Niaz Muhammad Khan, the Nawab of Bhupal was was also with the troops and received Rs. 5000/- per month from Zalim Singh. He had his own paiga of horses and camels and infantry with him. one Mohinuddin also served in the army with his troops on Rs. 900/per month and was paid Rs. 2,257/8/- for two month and twenty six days, Lun Karan was the treasurer who distributed pay to the soldiers and the followers. His clerks were paid four rupees per day for fifty three days. The special feature of the organization was that there was an arrangement in the camp for sadavrat or charity which was distributed every day for fifty three

days to the poor and needy who visited the camp. A cloth shop functioned for thirty six days and the clerks working at it were paid Rs. 2/- per day.¹

The Salary of the officers and soldiers.

Lalaji Balal, the officer commanding the forces received Rs. 10/- per day and Pandit Narhari Rao, another equally important officer was also paid the same salary. Other officers received from two to five rupees per day. Ratna Singh Kanhawat was paid Rs. 13/- per day for himself and his levy of 31 horses and 32 foot. The jagirdars and the chiefs of the Kotries were not paid any thing. They had to maintain themselves and their levies at their own expense.²

Zalim Singh's son and Lalaji Ballal meet the Sindhia.

From January to March 1785 Mahadji Sindhia operated in the region of Dig and Agra fort. Afrasiyab, the Mir Bakshi of King Shah Alam had placed the fort of Dig in charge of Malik Muhammad Khan. Accompanied by the king, the Sindhia marched to Dig and called upon Malik Muhammad Khan to surrender the fort in return for a jagir. The fort was not strongly garrisoned. The troops had not been paid their salaries for several months and, therefore, deserted to Mahadji who paid them rupees fifteen thousand immediately. Under these circumstances the Khan surrendered the fort which was occupied by the Sindhia's troops.³ The Sindhia now turned his attention to the Agra fort which was held by Shujadil. Zalim Singh was keeping himself posted with day to day news from the Sindhia's camp. After the fall of Dig he foresaw very correctly that the Sindhia's star was in ascendancy and that Agra was sure to fall into his hands and thereafter Mahadji would be the most powerful man in north India. The astute Jhala would not miss the

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1899, 64.1 (Baje talkon ki dovarki),

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1899. 64.1 (Baje Talkon ki Dovarki).

3. J.N. Sarkar. Fall of Mughal Empire. Vol.III.p. 210.

opportunity of worshipping such a rising star. He, therefore, sent large troops under his son Nanhlaal (Madho Singh) who was accompanied by Pandit Lalaji Ballal, Jagat Singh, Bakshi Shivalal and Sheikh Lal Muhammad to assist Sindhia in his operations. The strength of the troops is not mentioned but there were five elephants, several hundred horse and foot and large number of beldars (for clearing the road). The expenditure incurred in marching to and from Mathura was Rs. 13,281/- from which we can roughly estimate that the troops of Zalim Singh were composed of about 800 foot, 5 elephants and 3 officers besides Lalaji Ballal, and Madho Singh. There might have been about 300 followers. There was also a treasurer named Anyaji with the troops. On arrival at Mathura Lalaji presented 5 gold mohars as nazar and Rs. 5/- as nyochhawar. Madho Singh must have also presented nazar to Patel Mahadji Sindhia but it is not mentioned. The Kota troops were not put into action. Lalaji Ballal and Madho Singh both, therefore, stayed at Mathura for 14 days. In the meanwhile Ballal's wife went on pilgrimage of Braj and was escorted by Zalim Singh's troops. All the expenses were borne by Zalim Singh. In the meanwhile the Agra fort was besieged by Sindhia's general Rayaji, who occupied the city and its markets and opened trenches against the fort. Mahadji and the Emperor then moved upto Rajghat on the Jumana about four miles north of Agra. The garrison of Agra like that of Dig had not been paid their salaries for the last several months and, therefore, easily succumbed to the temptation of immediate payment offered by the Sindhia. The deserters were enrolled in the imperial army and the commandant had no alternative but to surrender. The Sindhia's flag began to fly on the ramparts of the Agra fort and the Emperor appointed him as the Subedar of Agra. At Mathura Madho Singh, Lalaji Ballal and other officers visited the temple of Shri Baldauji and presenting 'bhaint' on their behalf as well as on behalf of the Maharao of Kota.¹ As soon as they heard

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1840-41 Basta No. 65 Jamabandi ke Khate and Talikan Bhandar No. 1.

that the Agra Fort had fallen, Pandit Lalaji Ballal, Madho Singh and Jagat Singh with 800 troops and some artillery hurried to Agra to congratulate Sindhia. On this occasion Lalaji Ballal, Jagat Singh and Madho Singh offered five gold mohars each as present to Sindhia. The party was granted audience by the Mughal Emperor when Madho Singh, Jagat Singh, Girdhar Singh, Bakshi Shivalal, Pandit Tantia and Sheikh Lal Mohammad all offered nazar to the Emperor according to their status and Rs. 100/- as inam to his menial establishment.¹

Zalim Singh sends Lalaji Ballal to the Sindhia at Mathura.

The Sindhia had sustained a severe defeat at the hands of Maharaja Pratap Singh of Jaipur at Lalsot ana Tunga in the summer of 1787 and had retreated towards his base at Dig in August. Early next year (1788) he consolidated his forces and began preparations to reseatze Agra. When he was encamped at Mathura in early July 1788² Zalim Singh sent Lalaji Ballal probably to assure him of his loyalty and such military aid as was within the power of Zalim Singh to give. Lalaji Ballal met the Sindhia at his camp near Mathura and there presented to him two noble horses on behalf of Zalim Singh.³ Lalaji Ballal's retinue consisted of 100 men and 14 camels besides the two horses for presentation. Mahadji Sindhia's fortunes were at the lowest ebb in men and meterial in his campaign against Jaipur as a result of which Agra had fallen in the hands of Ismail Beg though Lakhava Dada continued to defend the fort, Ajmer had been captured by the Maharaja of Jodhpur and Ghulam Qadir had been appointed Mir Bakshi and regent at Delhi and had usurped the power of the King. Zalim Singh did not care to take notice of Sindhia in the beginning of July 1788 when he advanced from Gwalior side and encamped at Agra and Delhl.

1. Ibid.

2. J.N. Sarkar. Fall of Mughal Empire Vol. III, p. 277 and 280.

3. Kota state Archives of s. 1845 Basta No. 121.3.

Zalim Singh congratulates the Sindhia.

Sindhia's offensive which started in summer of 1788 was completed on 31st December 1788 when Ghulam Qadir Rohila and other prisoners were brought to him at his Mathura camp. About three months later Ghulam Qadir was put to death and his body was hung upon a tree about twelve miles from Mathura and his eye balls, nose and ears were put in a basket and sent to the blinded Shah Alam. The Sindhia's triumph was now complete.¹ Zalim Singh was receiving daily news of events in the Sindhia's camp as also of the operations of his troops against Ghulam Qadir Rohila. The events by the end of November and in early December 1788 indicated that Ghulam Qadir's capture and the Sindhia's triumph were undoubted. At this hour Zalim Singh sent Lallaji Balal to the Sindhi's camp at Mathura to meet and assure him of his loyalty and to offer him nazar. Thus at every turn of the tide Zalim Singh acted in a manner which was conducive to his safety and strength.

General plunder by Sindhia's troops (1792)

In 1792 the forces of Patel Mahadji Sindhia crossed the Chambal near Kusathala and, entering the Kota territory, plundered the parganas of Barod, Digod and Kaithun. In all 109 villages were affected. The raiders devastated the crops, lifted cattle and plundered every article of value including even grain and ornaments of deities inside temples. As though this was not enough they set the villages on fire and then went away. Zalim Singh appointed officers to estimate the extent of damage and destruction. The patels and patawaris prepared lists in this respect and the loss was estimated at Rs. 2,42,853/-¹ The assessment was done probably in order to demand compensation from Patel Mahadji Sindhia at some suitable future occasion and to help the peasantry to rehabilitate. Such losses used to be adjusted though rarely against the tributes payable to the Marathas by Zalim Singh, and were technically

1. [N. Sarkar, *Fall of Mughal Empire*. Vol. III p. 329, 330.

called paimali. Zalim Singh deserves credit for his solicitude for the welfare and sympathy with the peasantry.¹

Bapuji Sindhia's fleeing troops enter Kota

The troops of Bapuji Sindhia were operating in the northern part of Holkar's territory in 1794 and had lifted a large number of cattle. At that time the relations between the Holkar and the Sindhia were strained, and this accounts for these unfriendly activities but the Holkar was yet strong enough to chastise such raids. His troops under Lakava Dada were marched to drive out Bapuji's men. On learning of the approach of Holkar's troops, Bapuji's men took to their heels and entered the Kota territory through the Mukandara pass but they were relentlessly pursued by Lakava Dada. When they were about 12 miles from Kota they were molested by the Ahirs, the Jagirdars of Zalim Singh. The Ahirs were petty jagirdars of small hamlets and their duty was to prevent thefts, cattle lifting and way-laying and similar other crimes. These Ahirs fell upon the fleeing troops and relieved them of their articles and goods and seized their cattle. When the fleeing troops reached Kota they complained to Zalim Singh that the Ahirs of village Dalia had seized their cattle.²

Zalim Singh helps the fleeing troops

On receipt of the complaint Zalim Singh ordered an enquiry and appointed Surat Ram, a jagirdar of Dalia to investigate into the matter and report. He submitted a list of the articles and cattle seized and executed a bond. As the document throws an interesting light on the conditions obtaining in the last decade of the 18th century in the region of Harauti and Malwa it deserves to be quoted in full.

Herewith agreed by Rawat Surat Ram of village Dalia that a list of cattle and bullocks etc. seized by men of my village has been

1. Kota state Archives of s, 1849 Basta No. 7

2, Ibid

submitted. If some other articles of the troops are discovered they will be duly restored. If a resident of my village absconds, I shall be responsible and will produce him. If I go back on this agreement I should be considered untruthful in the court and Panchayat. Chait Budi 8 s. 1855

Todyo Rathod, Maya Ram Tanwar, Jiwan Didyo and Dallo Didyo-these four men never lived in the village I do not stand security for them. The remaining residents of the village will be produced by me when required. Chait Budi 8 s. 1855.

Sign of a dagger,

What is written above is correct.¹

The fleeing troops of Sindhia at other places in Kota

Bapuji's troops were subjected to simalar humiliating treatment at Kishaenpura, Prithipura, Bhatwara and Barapati hill and Chhipa Barod. Enquiries were made at these places also and the seized goods were recovered and restored to the troops where possible. The residents of the Barapati who were mostly Gujars seized generally the match locks and swords of the troops. They did not care for cattle and other goods. The recovered matchlocks were not made over to the troops but were appropriated by Zalim Singh.² The fact that the fleeing troops experienced molestation and humiliation at several places shows that they were not only unable to face Lakava's forces but were too demoralized even to resist the peasantry who were neither well armed nor organized. From the names of the villages it is evident that Bapuji's troops entered the Kota territory by way of the Mukendara pass and passing through Kota, Barod. Bhatwara and Mangrol entered the territory of Sindhia by way of Shivpur Barod.

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1855 Barta No. 39 Seega Topikhan Dhandar No. 21/1

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1855, 39. -

Mamlat paid to the Sindhia for Shahabad

An entry in the papers of the year 1809 shows that an amount of Rs. 9,599/— was paid to Sindhia as a tribute for Shahabad and the money was raised from the jagirdars and other important residents as follows:—¹

1. Raj Bhawani Singh	Rs. 1,596-8-0
2. Jamatdar Anwar Khanji	Rs. 2,719-0-0
3. Thakur Puran Mal	Rs. 513-0-0
4. Kanwar Lunkaranji Mehta	Rs. 710-0-0
5. Budh Singhji Ramlot	Rs. 448-10-0
6. Karan Singh Hada	Rs. 108-0-0
7. Chand Singh Ramlot	Rs. 810-0-0
8. Joshi Gopi Nath	Rs. 1,560-4-0
9. Bahadur Singh	Rs. 101-1-0
10. Rao Maharam	Rs. 60-12-0
11. Lakshman Das Vairagi	Rs. 51-14-0
12. Bhatta Dayanath	Rs. 40-8-0
13. Joshi Dev Karan	Rs. 33-12-0
14. Joshi Jit Ram	Rs. 33-12-0
15. Mehta Bhopa	Rs. 39-8-0
16. Kushal Singh	Rs. 33-12-0
17. Pandit Darjoji	Rs. 1,000-0-0
18. Lunkaranji Mehta	Rs. 500-0-0
19. Udak panewale Brahmanas	Rs. 213-0-0
20. Choudhari Kanugoyan	Rs. 536-10-0

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1866. Basta No. 74 Bhandar No. I "Do Varki Khatiat"

Daulat Rao Sindhia threatens raid (1808)

In 1808 Zalim Singh got information that Daulat Rao Sindhia was contemplating an organized raid of the Kota territory. This was the time when Sindhia's power was declining and the influence of the Britishers was in ascendance. Zalim Singh, therefore, did not try to placate the Sindhia but adopted protective measures. He sent his men (halkaras) to the threatened parganas to instruct people to conceal their belongings, hide their families and to make the region inhospitable in every respect in order to deprive the Sindhia of the fruits of his raids. The instructors were asked to help the people in every way in collaboration with the pargana officers and to send definite reports of compliance. Such reports were actually received by Zalim Singh.¹

Sindhia passes through Kota (1809)

Zalim Singh was informed by his halkaras in the month of June 1809 that Sindhia was planning an invasion of the Jaipur state and would march by way of Sapad and Shivpur Baroda, and crossing the river Parbati near Mangrol, would proceed further to Mangrol, Itawa, Gainta, Balban, Khatauli and Indergarh. The Parbati was fordable near Lalitpura and Sindhia was encamped in a garden on the right bank of the river. Lalitpur is situated about five miles from the river bank.² Zalim Singh was no longer anxious to please or placate Sindhia. His state had not yet accented the British protection but he knew, and a man of his insight and prudence had no difficulty in knowing it precisely, that before long the states of Rajputana like Sindhia and Holkar would accept the British alliance and that the days were gone when Kota had no alternative but to adopt a submissive attitude towards the Marathas. In fact the forces Mir Khan, who was a friend of Zalim Singh and received secret help from him, were already assisting the Britishers in suppressing the

1. Kota state Archives s. 1865, Basta No, 67 Bhandar No, 21/1

2. Kota state Archives of s, 1865 Jeth Sudi Panchami pargana spid Ki Khabran,

anarchy in the territories of the Marathas. In 1804 Zalim Singh had already occupied three villages/Sarasi, Atalpur, and Bajarawan in Gwalior and had established his own thanas there.¹ In October of the same year Mir Khan's forces had come to grips with a detachment of the Bhonsalas and had cut them to pieces and seized their 20 guns and 400 horses² Mir Khan had informed Zalim Singh to this effect in a very boastful language. The wily Pindari was apparently a lieutenant of Holkar and secretly a friend of Zalim Singh and simultaneously had also begun to make approaches to the British. Under these circumstances, Zalim Singh had practically thrown off the veil of submission and was now acting in self defence. On being apprised of Sindhia's intended movement, Zalim Singh mobilized adequate forces under the command of Mahipat Rao. The forces numbered about 1500 in all, which included 500 horse of Adjuant Ashraf Khan, 400 foot of Adjutant Kamardi Khan and an artillery of 14 guns and thirty men under Anup Singh, and 200 horses under Alam Ali Khan. Later on Gordhandas was sent to assist Mahipat Rao. with 51 horses, 4 camels and 2 elephants. What goes to the credit of Zalim Singh is that the bulls which were secured from the peasants for drawing the guns were paid for. An entry shows that an amount of Rs. 89/10/6 was paid for hiring 10 bulls for the purpose in the taluka of Ganesh Ganj (Itawa).³ Mahipat Rao reached near Rajodia in Sapad to encounter Sindhia. He seized several khais (deep pits of jwar) but when the two forces came to grips, Mahipat Rao lost many of his men. With the Kota forces were also the patels Kushal and Pema with their small levies. The monthly expenditure on the mobilization of this force was Rs. 10,297/14/-. This shows that Zalim Singh was preparing the people for self defence and was mobilizing public opinion against the raiders.⁴ It was not possible for Mahipat Rao to beat

1, Kota state Archives of s. 1861 Hukmon ki taliken Basta No. 69.

2, Kota state Archives of s. 1866 Basta Sapab ki khabran.

3, Ibid

4, Ibid

back the forces of Sindhia but the action had a deterrent effect on him who, while marching further, just skirted the Kota territory and saw to it that the least damage was done to the people of Kota.¹

SOCIAL RELATIONS

Initial Position

The Maharao of Kota had accepted the position of a feudatory to the Peshwa and the latter had humbled and fined him for his attempt to render military aid to the Nizam against him (Peshwa). Later on when Jayaji Appa was wounded in the siege of Kota, the Maharao was again fined heavily. Kota had been assigned by the Peshwa to the Sindhia and Holkar as their joint jagir and, therefore, they claimed to direct the affairs of the state. Hence when Ajit Singh was adopted to succeed Maharao Durjan Shal without any reference either to the Sindhia or the Holkar, both the Maratha chiefs felt much offended and marched against Kota and threatened the extinction of the ruling line, but the queen mother saved the situation by offering a Rakhi to the Sindhia. The continuance of the line was, therefore, granted but not until a tremendously heavy nazarana had been imposed. The Rakhi affair was the first social contact established between Kota and the Sindhia, who continued to observe the formality for three generations. Ranawatji, the adoptive queen mother of Ajit Singh continued to send Rakhi every year to the Sindhia, who used to respond with formal gifts to her and to her adoptive son, grandson and great grandson.²

Correspondence with Zalim Singh

After Guman Singh's death, his son and successor Umed Singh, who was a mere boy at the time of accession, receded into the back ground and Zalim Singh became the de facto ruler of the Kota state.

1. Ibid

2. Phalake Vol. I Lekhank 179

Though all correspondence from Sindhia was generally addressed to Maharao Umed Singh also, it was a mere formality, and even such letters were probably read and acknowledged by Zalim Singh. The tone and the form of Sindhia's letter addressed either to the Maharao of Kota or to Jhala Zalim Singh are a definite improvement on the letters which used to be addressed to them by the Mughal emperors or his subedar. The Muslim rulers used to address Rajput chiefs including even the Maharana of Udaipur in very humiliating terms and did not change their attitude even when their power had begun to decay, that is, even after Nadir Shah's invasion in 1739. The Mughal emperor used to say, "to our most loyal servant, formost among the subordinates or to one whose head is high due to service and loyalty." Sindhia's very first letter addressed to Zalim Singh begins.¹ राजश्री जालमसिध गोसावीं यांसि..... राम
राम विनंती ऊपर येथील कुशल..... स्वकीये कुशल लिहित आसिले
पाहिजे and ends बहुत काहे लिहिणे लोभ कीजे हे विनंती ।

The second letter is addressed by Subedar Kedar Rao Sindhia and Patel Madho Rao Sindhia who address Zalim Singh as सिधश्री सर्व उपमा लायक ठाकुर राजश्री जालमसिधजी वा पुंडरीक व्यासजी श्री गोपाल रामजी जोग लिखाइतं सुभेदार राजश्री केदारराव सिधे वा पटेल राजश्री माधव राव सिधे केन वंच्या । उठाका समाचार भला छे । राज का सदा भला चाहिजे जी ।

All the correspondence which was held later on either by Mahadji Sindhia or Daulat Rao Sindhia with Zalim Singh or rulers of Kota were couched in equally polite language and this courtsey continued till power was transferred from the Marathas to the British. Even after this transfer of political power the correspondence between Kota and Gwalior or between Gwalior and rulers of Jhalawar, the heirs and successors of Zalim Singh continued to be

1. Phalake. Vol. I Letter 272

2. Phalake. Vol. I. p. 247 letter 280

polite and friendly.¹ The letters which Zalim Singh addressed to Mahadji Sindhia and Daulat Rao Sindhia were most respectfully worded. The address was in accordance with the tradition of social attiquete "सिद्धेश्री सर्व उपमा योग्य पटेल श्रीमहाराज etc. and used to end invariably with the words." हेतु महारवानगी राखो द्यो तामूं अवक रखावसी । अठे सब बोंवार राज को ही छे ।²

Zalim Singh gives gifts to Sindhia's men

When Sindhia's troops evacuated the Dayabhav territory of Kota state.³ Zalim Singh spent an amount of about rupees 8,000/— for bestowing gifts to the officers and their establishment. This was done evidently to placate the troops and also to establish friendly and social relations not only with Sindhia himself but with his officers and retinue.⁴

Zalim Singh and Kamavisdar of Shahabad

Zalim Singh had seized Shahabad from the Sindhia in 1780 but the latter never formally relinquished his claim to it. The chief of Shahabad was a jagirdar of Sindhia and used to pay him tribute. The Sindhia now argued that responsibility of payment had devolved upon Zalim Singh. The Jhala agreed to pay the tribute by collecting it from the petty jagirdars who were under the protection of the Shahabad fort. To ensure regular payment Sindhia posted a Kamavisdar at Shahabad whose duty was not to administer the pargana but to collect Sindhia's tribute probably direct from the officials and jagirdars there. Zalim Singh accepted this arrangement because he was not in a position to resist Sindhia's demand. On the other hand Sindhia was anxious not to possess the fort because it would not be of any particular military importance to him. It is situated

1. Phalake. Vol. II page 64 Letter 77

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1823-45 Basta No. 1 Hukamo Ki Talim Bhandar No. 3

3. Infra page

4. Kota state Archives of s. 1803 Basta No. 5 Bhandar No. I

about 100 miles from Kota and its possession offered no advantage either to Zalim Singh or to Sindhia. Besides Sindhia could re-seize it any time he liked, but what he really cared for was the tribute which he used to receive from the Brahman jagirdar of that fort. To be doubly assured as to its punctual payment he posted one Shivji Bitthal as Kamavisdar of Shahabad. The presence of this man was a source of irritation to Zalim Singh, but he stood it and always tried to keep him pleased by substantial gifts of robes, ornaments and cash on social occasions. His successors were also similarly favoured. On the occasion of marriages, birth of sons, or recovery from disease, congratulatory presents used to be sent to the Kamavisdar who used to feel much honoured by this treatment¹.

Jagirdars and officers of Sindhia friendly to Zalimsingh

Pandit Shahji Jadurajji Lambaria and Pandit Rangraoji were also close friends of Zalim Singh. He used to send them suitable presents from time to time. A gun with a silver chain was presented to Jadurai at Ramgarh (Mangrol Tehsil). Similar present was also made to Pandit Rangrao. A dagger was presented to Shahji Lambaria. He was formerly the Fauj Bakshi of the Holkar but later came over to the Sindhia. A rich dagger was also presented to Pandit Rangrao through Pandit Hariji.² A silver hukka was presented to Fakerji Gharpadya (Gharpore) through Pandit Narpat Rao.³ Such presents continued to be made by Zalim Singh to the important and influential officers in Sindhia's camp. These were not so much the marks of friendly feelings as of diplomatic dealings and this was the main source of Zalim Singh's strength. He was anxious to have friends at every place.

Zalim Singh and Maharao congratulates Mahadji Sindhia

Mahadji Sindhia conquered Goadh sometime in 1783 and

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1841 Basta No. 26 Rit Karawar ka Bhandar No. 5

2. Kota State Archives of s. 1846 Basta No. 3

3. Kota state Archives of s. 1863 Basta No. 5 bhandar No. 1. Nand Ganon ki Ovari.

Zalim Singh advised Maharao Umed Singh to write to him a letter of congratulations. Accordingly, two letters were written, one in the monsoon and the second in the winter of the same year. (1783). The first letter says "I am glad to know that Gwalior has gained victory on the fort and your rule has been set up. I had not heard news of such a tough fight before. This good luck was reserved for you.¹ (from Nandgaon Savan Sudi 11 s. 1840). The second letter dated Mah Sudi 5, s 1840 written from Nand Gaon says, "I am extremely glad to hear the news of your rule having been set up on Gaodh, and of Rana's surrender, God has bestowed great fame on you. I am entirely at your goodself's disposal. More you will know from the letter of my maternal uncle Shri Zalim Singhji. Kindly let me know if I can be of any service".

Zalim Singh waits on Mahadji Sindhia.

Zalim Singh went to pay a courtesy visit to Mahadji Sindhia at Ujjain in the beginning of the monsoon of 1780. He was accompanied by Pandit Lalaji Ballal and nine jagirdars, of whom Raj Bhawani Singh was related to Zalim Singh. The occasion was that Mahadji's daughter Balabai was expecting a child and the ceremony of what is known as phul chouk in Rajasthan was about to be performed. This afforded an opportunity to Zalim Singh to flatter the Sindhia. Zalim Singh paid two visits to Mahadji Sindhia. The first one was official when Zalim Singh and Lalaji Ballal offered nazars of 5 gold mohars each. Raj Bhawani Singh and other officers and sardars presented nazars to Sindhia². On the following day Zalim Singh called on Mahadji Sindhia at his haveli and again offered various costly presents to him, his relations, friends and officers. He presented also 5 gold mohars to Balabai and spent Rs. 380/- on other articles for her. Important officers of Sindhia were also given saropavs, among whom were Pandit Bala Raoji, Abha Chitnawis, Baluba Tantia, Raiji Patel, Pandit Sadashiv Bhau Phadnawis, Pandit Raghoji Ballal,

1. Kota State Archives s. 1845.

2. Kota State Archives of S1936—37 Basta NO 2. Do Varki Parchejat Bhandar I.

Baloji Janardan, Sada Shankar Munshi and Sevaji Bithal, including Laduji Deshmuch, son-in-law of Mahadji¹.

Zalim Singh's presents on the birth of Mahadji's son.

Mahadji Sindhia was blessed with a son in 1781 when Zalim Singh sent him a letter of congratulations, full of fulsome flattery. He presented to the Sindhia a sarpench worth Rs. 1,027/- , 3 fans of silver handles, two guns with gold chains as also three horses each costing Rs. 1,000/-. Other articles of the value of Rs. 1,820/- were presented and Rs. 1,101/- were spent. Gulabji Sindhia got Rs. 500/- and Dattaji 25 gold mohars. To the menial servants, attendants, chaukidars and others, clothes and cash worth about Rs. 500/- were given. Thus the total expenditure of about Rs. 10,000/- was incurred. It may be noted that the purchasing value of Rs. 10,000/- in 1836 was about Rs. 2 lacs of today². Zalim Singh used to be always in search of an excuse to see Mahadji Sindhia. In 1780 when he went to visit Shahabad, he proceeded on to Gwalior just to pay a courtesy visit to the Sindhia and offered presents to him and gave gifts to his establishment³,

Sindhia sends condolence to Zalim Singh.

Zalim Singh lost one of his mothers in 1788 when she was over 60 years of age. On this occasion Mahadji Sindhia sent his two big officers, Pandit Gangadharji and Pandit Tantiyaji to offer condolence on his behalf. The other Maratha officers of note who came to condole were Pandit Khanduji, Pandit Balaji, Pandit Ambaji, Pandit Abhaji, Pandit Shankar and Pandit Narhari Raoji⁴. Two years later when Zalim Singh celebrated the marriage of his daughter Ajab Kanwar Bai, Mahadji

1. Kota State Archives of s. 1836—37 Fasta No.2 Do Varki Parchejat Bhandar No. 1

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid.

4. Kota State Archives of s. 1845 Basta No.121 Talikon kaBhaodar No. 3

Sindhia responded, at least nominally, to the social courtesies which Zalim Singh had been so substantially and lavishly extending to Mahadji Sindhia. The latter sent as nyota Rs. 399/- and the entry is "Sindhia shrimant Patel Sahib Rs. 399/-".

Presents to Dault Rao Sindhia

When Daulat Rao Sindhia succeeded his uncle Mahadji Sindhia in 1806, Zalim Singh sent him a nazar of several gold mohars, rich robes and ornaments. The articles were sent with Mohammad Nurkhan who was accompanied by a small retinue of horse and foot¹. An amount of Rs. 230/6/6 was spent as expenditure on in and out journey of Mohammad Nurkhan. Besides, two excellent horses each costing Rs. 800/- were also sent to be presented to Daulat Rao Sindhia and the men who conducted them to Gwalior were paid Rs. 39/- for expenses on journey. After that Zalim Singh continued to send friendly presents to Daulat Rao from time to time. In 1806 he sent him silver 'saz' worth Rs. 399/2/- for his horse and after a few months dispatched a sword with a rich gold hilt costing Rs. 1,543/- as a present². Such presents continued to be sent by Zalim Singh till the political relations with Marathas came to an end.

Zalim Singh and Daulat Rao Sindhia.

Zalim Singh's relations with Daulat Rao Sindhia were more informal than they were with Mahadji Sindhia and it was natural. Daulat Rao was not so strong and powerful as his father. Zalim Singh's position at the time of Daulat Rao's accession was unassailable. However, Zalim Singh continued to be as respectful to Daulat Rao as he was to his father. Zalim took the earliest opportunity of ingratiating himself into the favour of Daulat Rao. Zalim Singh's

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1. Kota state Archives of s. 1849, Basta No. 4 Ajab Kanwar Bai Ka byav Ko Hisab.
 2. Kota state Archives of s. 1863, Basta No.5 Bhandar No. I Nand Gaon ki Ovari.

wife had become the Rakhibandh sister of Daulat Rao in 1804 and continued this formality till she lived¹. The following year after having operated in the northern territory of Holkar, when Daulat Rao entered the Kota state and encamped at Ranpur, Zalim Singh treated him and his entire forces as his guests. Daulat Rao stayed at Ranpur (nine miles south of Kota) for several days, because it was monsoon and Ranpur was all green and pleasant. Here Daulat Rao and his officers as well as his petty clerks purchased cloth from the merchants of Kota, and Zalim Singh paid the bills and presented the cloth to the Sindhia and his men. The bills amounted to Rs. 8,900/-². During the Sindhia's stay at Ranpur, Zalim Singh did not only extend his hospitality to the whole lashkar but even paid a little pocket money to the troops and the followers³. Zalim Singh was becoming now more and more friendly with Sindhia and Holkar and probably he was considered by both these chiefs as a man of superior wisdom. They both at least knew that Zalim Singh understood more about horses than they themselves, and, therefore, the ponies for their personal use almost invariably used to be purchased by Zalim Singh⁴. Thus Daulat Rao was quite close and friendly to Zalim Singh.

Daulat Rao Sindhia's dak arrangements

When the Sindhia was operating in Mewar, Zalim Singh made efficient arrangements for sending his dak there from Kota, and made himself responsible for its safe transport. This shows that Daulat Rao Sindhia used to keep himself informed about all the places where his authority was recognized. It is interesting to note that from Kota to Goadh in Mewar the dak choukis were set up at the following places :—

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1. Kota state Archives of s. 1861
 2. Kota state Archives of s 1862 Basti No. 27, Rit Karawar ke Bhandar ki Taliken Bhandar No 5.
 3. Ibid.
 4. Kota state Archives s. 1866 Raj Mahal's Bari Kachehari ke Kagzat.

Balope, Thaleda, Jot Sagar, Naugaon, Mangli, Thana. Sarsa, Pader, Babri, Sahipura, Gharta, Dhabli, Goadh.¹

At about this time Daulat Rao Sindhia had begun to realize that his forces were dwindling and it was necessary to infuse new blood in them. With this object he started recruitment in the northern part of the Kota state. The community which supplied the largest number of recruits were the minas. inhabiting the parganas of Mangrol, Barod, Siswali and Itawa. To maintain good relations with Daulat Rao, Zalim Singh accorded necessary permission to Neemaji Shitolia, Govind Rao Deshmukh and Pandit Bhau for enlisting recruits.² It was for this reason that Kota became a place of special interest for Daulat Rao and he liked to hear from his wakil every detail of the affairs at Kota.

Zalimsingh purchases grain for Sindhia

In 1807 when Daulat Rao Sindhia's forces were operating round about Rajgarh, about 14 miles south from the boundary of Kota. and were encamping at Rajgarh, they began to feel extreme scarcity of food grains. Business men were, therefore, sent to Manoharthana, the southern most Tehsil head quarters of the Kota state. A large quantity of grain was purchased from the local merchants, but full payment of the price was not made. Therefore, Zalim Singh had to pay Rs. 1.040/- and provide all facilities to the purchasers. The scarcity of grain was the usual difficulty which the troops of Sindhia and Holkar used to feel during operations or encampment. And it was on such occasions that the troops used to start fretting and frowning and become mutinous. As the power of the Marathas began to decline and the collections of tribute and chowth became difficult it was a problem for them how to keep their forces satisfied.

Zalim Singh's news writers in Maratha camp.

As a consummate statesman and diplomat, Zalim Singh used

1. Kota State Archives of S. 1866 Basta No. 4 Bhandar No. 3.

2. Kota State Archives of S. 1864. Basta No. 3. Bhandar No. 3.

to keep himself posted with most up-to-date information as to the movements and affairs of Sindhia's camp. He had five news-letter writers constantly employed for this purpose and paid Rs. 37/8/- per month to them. He had similar arrangements with regard to the camp and movements of other contemporary chiefs also. Sometimes he used to go to meet Sindhia in his own camp. In the early monsoon of 1809 Daulat Rao Sindhia was encamped at Sanwata from where he wrote letters to Chitore and Badnore demanding an early payment of tribute and threatening that if the payment was not made in time Nawab Mir Khan would encamp in Mewar and devastate the country. This was a serious situation, for the adequate assessment of which Zalim Singh proceeded to the Sindhia's camp and had a long interview with him. It was at this time that Sarje Rao fled away from the Sindhia's camp and in the scuffle which ensued between him and his pursuers he was wounded, and as he was being brought to be produced before Sindhia he was killed with a lance by Anand Rao Sindhia. Sarje Rao was a personal friend of Zalim Singh and the event must have deeply grieved him. This was followed by the arrest of four leading Sardars in the Maratha camp, namely Balaji, Baba Patankar, Apa Chatnavis and Krishnaji Pandit. Simultaneously Ambaji Prabhakar and Dadaji Ingolia fled away. The troops became mutinous and plundered and attacked each other. Zalim Singh must have got scent of the ugly situation developing and, therefore, he proceeded to meet Sindhia and study the developments personally¹.

Zalim Suppresses Mutiny of John Baptista's troops

Even earlier than this trouble had been brewing in Sindhia's camp and in his troops every where. John Baptista, Sindhia's general was not feeling happy over the turn which the events had taken and wanted that either his troops should be paid regularly or he be relieved of his duty and responsibility. In the early monsoon of this year (1809) he was encamped in the dense forest of Kadail

1. Kota state Archives of s, 1864, Basta No. 3, Bhandar No. 3.

between Shivpur and Sipri. Three of his platoons came to Sindhia's camp and demanded payment of the arrears of their salary. For four days they continuously surrounded his camp and when no payment was arranged they demanded an interview with the Sindhia. When they were not granted an interview they created disturbances and created a row in front of the Sindhia's camp. This caused panic in the whole camp and the ladies of the Sindhia's family who were with him in the camp rode off to Janasi and the Sindhia himself was preparing to run away, but in the meanwhile John Baptista's platoons surrounded his tent; and this further aggravated the situation and the trouble spread even in Sindhia's own camp. The troops began to raise yells and became very noisy and threatened to lay down their arms and leave the guns if no immediate payment was made. When the crisis became too serious Sindhia requested Zalim Singh, who happened to be present in the camp, and Gopal Bhau as also other officers to pacify the troops of John Baptista. Later John Baptista also joined them. Zalim Singh and his colleague succeeded in disarming the mutinous troops and taking away the guns from them. Necessary arrangements were made to maintain peace in the camp¹. Late in the evening the ladies returned to the camp from Janasi but during the whole night there was a lot of stir and sensation in the camp.

Daulat Rao confers with Sheo Dan Singh

In the early winter of 1812 the Sindhia invited Maharaja Sheodan Singa of Gainta (Kota State) for consultation on important matters. Sheodan Singh was a leading sardar of the Kota State and very much in the confidence of Zalim Singh. He had insight into the politics of the times and his advice in respect of them was sound and useful. Sheodan Singh responded to

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1. Kota state Archives of s, 1866, Khabaran Godha Halkaran Ki Mulan Gaon Sawata, Sindhia Ke Lashkar Ki.
 2. Kota state Archives of s, 1886 Ashab Budi 2 Khabaran Halkaran ki.

the invitation and went to Gwalior accompanied by his Kamdar Shah Jiwan Ram. The Sindhia discussed with them the possibility of the Khinchī Rajputs of Central India and the Raoraja of Bundi rendering him military aid; and entreated Sheodan Singh to help him in his difficulty. The Sindhia gave him and his Kamdar rich robes of honour and a necklace of pearls, a sarpech and a horse as present. Daulat Rao himself put the sarpech on Sheodan's head, applied scent and offered betel with his own hands. Assurances of mutual aid were made at the time of departure.¹

Zalim Singh permits Sindhia to shoot in Kota territory

When Daulat Rao was encamped at Asnawar, a petty hamlet north of the Ramgarh hill on the bank of the river Parbati, he wanted to enjoy shooting in the neighbouring forest. Zalim Singh sent instructions to his forest guards to set up machans in the Ramgarh jungle but Sindhia's men suggested that the machans be set up also in the forest of Gardā Pagara, 10 miles from Ramgarh. To this the forest guards would not agree and the matter was reported to the Sindhia by his men. Rather than feel annoyed, Daulat Rao took it gracefully and remarked that "Raj Sahib's (Zalim Singh's) instructions should be respected." Ithuji Apa, a sardar of Sindhia did not like the attitude of Zalim's men but the Sindhia remarked, "No, we need not take it ill. We will shoot where we have been permitted to. We should adhere to the instruction of Zalim Singhji and should not proceed to Gardā Pagara." Not only this, he called Sadulla, a forest official of Kota and said to him, "I will go for shooting just where you will permit us to go." To this Sadulla said, "Raja Sahib is always prepared to carry out your orders. But you need not create any awkward situation in this territory." This reply pleased Sindhia immensely. The shooting was arranged in the forest of Kanhadia. Apaji proceeded ahead and Bajan Bai followed him in Miana. Fakirji Gharpore, Fakirji Nadawa and Sadulla Khan escorted her on foot. The Sindhia rode an elephant.

1. Kota State Archives of s. 1812.

Separate machans were set up for both of them and each had a large retinue of Sardars and Officers. The hawalgir and Katwal of Ramgarh and Relawan were also present. The Sindhiar's camp was pitched between Asnawar and the Parvati, in a grove of tamarin trees but some mischievous elements entered the village and mistreated the people. On this the villagers complained to Sindhia, who ordered Khatu Kalia to drive out the soldiers from the village, if necessary, by flogging.¹

ZALIM SINGH AND THE SINDHIA'S OFFICERS

Zalim Singh's general policy towards the Marathas was of personal friendly contact, not only with the chiefs but also with their sardars, in fact with all those who counted. Hence he tried to be friendly with all the officers of Sindhia and was quite intimate with the important sardars in his court and camp—namely Fakirji Gharpore, Khandaji Sindhia, Pandit Narharrao, Anand Rao, Jiwan Rao Anaji and Ithuba Appa. With these and many others he maintained social relations all through his life. His friendship with several families of Maratha nobles commenced in the eighties of the eighteenth century and continued till his death. By this policy he exercised great influence in the Maratha courts and was popular in the camps both among the rank and file.

Khandaji Sindhia was a jagirdar of Padon near Shahabad. He was a friend of Zalim Singh. Once he was in great need of ammunition and Zalim Singh sent him two maunds of gun-powder from the state Topkhana. When his daughter was married, Zalim Singh supplied two hundred maunds of wheat and did not charge any price for it. Of course, wheat sold at that time at the rate of

1. Kota State Archives of s. 1886. Ashad Sudi 5, Khabaran Holkaran li.

2. Ibid.

rupee one and four annas per maund.¹ Another sardar equally intimate was Pandit Nanaji. His daughter used to come to pay respects to Zalim Singh and his wife, and used to receive 'bidai' from both of them.² When she was married, she along with her husband, Bapu Hari, came to see Zalim Singh's wife, who treated both of them with great affection, as daughter and son-in-law. She gave 4 gold mohars and a saropav to the girl and Juhari (gift to son-in-law) to Bapuji Hari.³ Pandit Narharrao was next in importance to Lalaji Ballal. He was quite a young man. Narhar Rao's daughter used to go to pay respects to Zalim Singh's wife who used to treat her with kindness and affection and honour her with gifts. Even her maid-servants used to get some bakhsis. Pandit Narharrao later settled in Kota and was one of the important jagirdars of the state. As he had close contact with Sindhia's court, Zalim Singh considered him very important and helpful and maintained continuous friendly relations with him.⁴ Zalim Singh's daughter Ajab Kanwar Bai popularly known as Naina Bai had adopted him as her Rakhibandh brother.⁵ At the time of her marriage Narhar Rao gave rich presents and a splendid dinner which was attended by Zalim Singh and the ladies of his family, accompanied by a very large retinue.⁶ When the sister of Pandit Anand Rao left Kota, Zalim Singh deputed some horse and 32 foot to escort her. They took three months in going and coming and the expenditure which amounted to Rs. 411/- was borne by Zalim Singh. When Fakirji Gharpare was in difficulty in 1804 and was forced to seek shelter under Zalim Singh, he wrote to his hawalgir at Manoharthana that when Ghorpare's family arrived there, they should be accommodated comfortably in the fort and paid a maintenance allowance of Rs. 100

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1845. Basta No. 121, Bhandar 3.

2. Ibid,

3. Kota state Archives of s. 1846 Basta No. 3.

4. Kota state Archives of s. 1844 Basta No. 3.

5. Kota state Archives of s. 1846 Basta No. 3,

6. Kota state Archives of s. 1849 Basta No. 4,

7. K ta state Archives of s. 1802 Basta No, 64 Bhandar 3.

per month, from the income under the head of land revenue.¹ To the close relatives of Sindhia, Holkar or Peshwa, Zalim Singh was specially courteous and respectful. In 1794 Harkubai the maternal grand mother of Peshwa visited Kota for the darshan of Mathuradhish. When she left, the Maharao of Kota presented to her a saropav worth Rs. 501/- and Zalim Singh arranged an escort under Pandit Abhaji and incurred an expenditure of Rs. 595/- on this account.²

On important festivals Zalim Singh used to invite and feast influential officers of Sindhia with their retinues. On these occasions the menial servants were given small bakhshis. There used to be the festivities, music and dance. This was done to maintain cordiality with the Marathas and thus gain political advantage and have influence in the Sindhia's court³. The sardars who invariably used to be guests of Zalim Singh on such festivals were Lalaji Ballal and after him his son Ram Chandraji Ballal, Nanaji, Shankerji, Narhar Rao, Mahipat Rao, and Balvant Rao⁴. The sardars most close to Zalim Singh were Mahipat Rao, Ganpat Rao, and Setha Sakharam, and Pandit Bhav Ram Bapu. When the sons of Mahipat Rao and Ganpat Rao were married, Zalim Singh sent Rs. 1,000/- to each of them as present. When Sakharam celebrated his son's marriage, Madan Singh was sent to make presents on behalf of Zalim Singh strictly according to Rajputana custom.⁵ Sakharam's daughter-in-law was asked to perform what is known as the 'gode' ceremony in Rajputana according to which custom the bride sits near the father-in-law who puts his hand on her head. This ceremony is not invariably performed but when done, the daughter-in-law ceases to observe any purdah from the father-in-law, which otherwise she has to observe with strictness. When Shakharam's

1. Koja state Archives of s, 1861 Basta No, 69 Bhandar No, 3, Hukmon ki Taliien

2. Kota state Archives of s, 1851 Basta No, 21 Bhandar No, 21,

3. Kota State Archives of S. 1838 Basta No, 67 Bhandar No. 3.

4. Ibid.

5. Kota state Archives of s, 1839 Basta No, 8 Rit Karanar Bhandar No 5

daughter-in-law went through this ceremony she was given¹ gold mohars as present by Zalim Singh.² When Madan Singh returned home after marriage Sakharam's wife performed what in Rajputana is called the kalash ceremony. This indicates a sort of family relationship because the Kalash ceremony is performed either by a sister or cousin or by father's sister. From this it is clear that Sakharam's relations with Zalim Singh were very close.² When the Brahman sardars of Sindhia celebrated the Janeu (Yajyopaveet) ceremony of their sons, Zalim Singh used to send suitable presents to each one of them³. Similarly, presents used to be sent on occasions of the marriages of sons and daughters of these sardars.³ But when Sakharam celebrated his son's janeu (Yajyopaveet) ceremony presents were offered severally on behalf of Zalim Singh, Madho Singh and Bapulal (Madan Singh).⁴ Sakha Ram built a temple of Mahadev, on the inauguration ceremony of which Zalim Singh sent a suitable 'bhaint'.⁵ One Pandit Bhav Malhar was also a close friend of Zalim Singh. His wife became a sati at Kota on his death and Zalim Singh spent Rs. 2,200/- on her after-death rites, and Rs. 50/- on her yearly shradhha ceremony⁶.

Maratha Sardars in the wedding of Zalim Singh's Daughter.

Zalim Singh had a daughter named Ajab Kanwar Bai popularly known as Nainha Bai. She was married to Rao Raja Bishen Singh of Bundi, and the wedding was celebrated with great eclat and splendour. On this occasion a large number of Maratha sardars were invited and almost all of them participated in the function. Among those invited forty-one were Maratha sardars and officers of eminence. Everyone of them brought as large a retinue as he could. The total number of men who accompanied these sardars

1. Ibid

2. Ibid

3. Kota state Archives of s. 1819-1850 Basta No. 8 Rit Karawar Bhandar No 5

4. Ibid

5. Ibid

6. Ibid

was in the neighbourhood of 2000 and there were 3 elephants, 401 horses, 38 camels and a large number of bullock carts and 'raths'. Those who brought a specially large retinue were Ambaji Inglia, Pandit Lalaji Ballal, Pandit Narhar Raoji and Pandit Appaji. The sardars came from Bundi, Gwalior, Indore, Ujjain, Shivpur, Baroda, Lakheri, Guger, and some parganas of Kota. Formal invitations were sent even to the Peshwa and 24 leading sardars and officers of Poona; and among them were included Peshwa's maternal grandmother and one another lady who is simply referred to as Bai Sahib. But it seems that only a few of them attended the marriage. Others sent presents.¹

Presents on this marriage.

Presents were received from the Sindhia and the Holkar, and all other sardars who attended the marriage, as also from most of those who could not come. There are 20 entries indicating that presents worth from Rs. 100/- to Rs. 3,000/- were offered. The biggest present was from Lalaji Ballal, and then followed Narhar Rao, Ambaji Inglia etc. The presents consisted of rich robes, necklaces, cash, and even horses from a few sardars².

Maratha Sardars attend the wedding of Zalim Singh's grandson.

Zalim Singh had a grandson (Madho Singh's son) who was born in 1807. Zalim Singh celebrated his marriage in 1823 when he was a little over 15 years old with the daughter of the Rao of Rampura. The regent was now near about eighty four years old, totally blind and physically broken. But he was still in full possession of all his mental faculties and solved the political, administrative and financial problems with the same astuteness and ability which helped him in dealing so successfully with the Marathas since 1764. At the time of Madan Singh's marriage.

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1849 Basta No. 4 Ajab Kanwar Bai In Vyab In Kagaz In Jhala's family records,

2 Ibid

Zalim Singh had reached the pinnacle of power. The Marathas raids had ceased, the Britishers were his admirers, his ruler had been defeated and rendered a puppet in his hands, the future of his family had been secured by the secret clause in the treaty, and peace and tranquility had been restored all over the state. Zalim Singh was naturally in the happiest mood in 1823 while celebrating the wedding of his grandson. He, therefore, organized the festivities and functions of the marriage on a very grand and lavish scale. The officers in general charge of the arrangements were Pandit Mahipat Rao and Pandit Krishnaji Tantiya¹. Both Zalim Singh and the Marathas were now under the protection of the East India Company and Zalim Singh no longer stood under fear of raids by the Holkar or the Sindhia. His invitations, therefore, to the Marathas were, an expression of social courtesy and indicative of his good manners. He extended invitations to a large number of Maratha sardars of whom 12 were notable and important. Of these, five were the Jagirdars of Kota and the rest outsiders. Zalim Singh honoured them all by gifts which, though suitable, were no longer as lavish as they were on the occasion of his daughter's marriage. The presents to 14 Maratha guests among whom were included representatives of Daulat Rao Sindhia and the Holkar valued Rs. 2,898/8/-. Substantial presents were offered to Zalim Singh on this occasion only by a few Maratha sardars. Pandit Ram Chandraji Lala, the grandson of Lalaji Ballal presented 52 saropavs costing Rs. 1,209/-. He was followed by a few others who were mostly the jagirdars of Kota.

ZALIM SINGH AND HOLKAR

Zalim Singh's efforts for friendliness.

Zalim Singh was ever anxious to maintain peace and order in his state, and with this object in view he made constant endeavours to keep friendly relations with Holkar, but the latter was as troublesome as the Sindhia, nay, rather more; because sometimes he threatened to attack Kota, and made very exorbitant demands for

money. Zalim Singh had come in close contact with Malhar Rao Holkar, Jaswant Rao Holkar, Ahalyabai Holkar, Harku Bai Holkar and lastly Malhar Rao Holkar II, but the chief with whom he had to deal for the longest period was Jaswant Rao Holkar. He addressed Zalim Singh as Kaka (Uncle) but this did not prevent him from suspecting Zalim Singh's intentions, making heavy financial demands, devastating certain portions of the state, and seizing certain places.

A Devastating raid by Holkar.

Tukoji Holkar and Mahadhaji Sindhia made a devastating raid of the Kota state in 1769 and created havoc every where in the southern parganas and proposed to desist only in case an amount of three lacs were given to them. Zalim Singh found himself in a difficult position and with a great difficulty he obtained an amount of over two lacs by having the state jewellery pawned through Bhatt Nityanand and Bhopat Singh¹.

Maratha generals enter Kota territory.

News was received in 1776 that Ambaji Maratha, Manuji Kadam and Ikhuji were leading Maratha troops by the route of Jhapayata into the territory of the Kota state. Zalim Singh immediately sent his troops under Pandit Tantiaji, Bakshi Shivrul and Bakshi Akhai Ram to prevent the generals from doing any damage to the Kota peasantry and, if need be, to resort to armed action. The Maratha troops and Zalim Singh's forces kept encamped for three months in the pargana of Barod, north of Kota, facing each other but without firing a shot or permitting even a minor skirmish. Fortunately the Maratha generals did not risk a contest, and the ravage of the northern parganas was averted, but it cost Zalim Singh an amount of Rs. 4,561/-².

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1850 Basta No. 9. Lakshmiji ka Bhandar.

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1870-05 Basta No. 51 Bhandar No. 1. Do varki Jamanbandi.

Raid of Jhalarapatan and neighbouring Parganas.

Holkar's minor raids never ceased. Sometimes they were led by himself and sometimes by his military officers. In 1793 there was a major and widespread raid of parganas in the neighbourhood of Jhalarapatan and so wide-spread was the panic that Zalim Singh had to proceed personally with all the available troops in Kota in order to restore confidence among the people and to save the parganas from complete annihilation. The result was that the capital was denuded of all troops and even the routine work was paralysed for want of men. This necessitated the employment of temporary troops for protection and other services which used to be rendered by regular soldiers. Zalim Singh remained encamped near Jhalarapatan to watch the movements of the Maratha troops who were hovering about the parganas of Chaumahala, Sat-Mahala and Urmal¹. Holkar was not prepared to face Zalim Singh's troops and suffer losses of men and material. He wanted only plunder, and finding that it was not possible, he withdrew his troops and thus the destruction of the parganas was averted.

Holkar's march to Kota.

The following year, the Holkar marched towards Kota. Zalim Singh, of course, got timely information through his spies and took protective measures. He posted his guards at all the fords and key posts, and stopped the ingress into Kota territory of all suspected men. The Marathas were always anxious to avoid a pitched battle. When the Holkar learnt that Zalim Singh was not going to take his raid lying down, he postponed his march, but it cost Zalim Singh a lot of headache and an amount of Rs. 1,166/5/- for employing guards and mobilizing certain troops.² It may be noted that the protective arrangements were entrusted to Shujat Mohammad.

1, Kota state Archives of s. 1851, Basta No. 29, Topkhana ka kagad, Bhandar No. 21/1.

2, Kota state Archives of s. 1855, Basta No. 30 Bhandar No. 21/2 Roj-namcha Nakdi ka.

Holkar raids the pargana of Keshorai Patan.

The town and pargana of Keshorai Patan were the main targets both of Holkar and Sindhia. In 1804 these chiefs were encamped near this town and reduced to dust the villages of Hathi Khera, Rangpur, Manpura, Dashuria and Kheri on the boundaries of Kota. All available property was plundered and the hamlets were set on fire. It was all devastation before Holkar left Patan. After his departure, relief was rendered to the villagers by Zalim Singh for rehabilitation.¹

Havoc in Suket.

In 1804 the Holkar repeated his raids in the pargana of Suket. There was a widespread plunder and destruction of houses and crops. Even the cattle of people were carried away, which made it impossible for them to resettle themselves. Zalim Singh, as usual, advanced them money and rendered all reasonable help to enable them to return to their homes and cultivate the land. But the pargana was so much shocked and shaken that for a long time the people did not feel settled and were under a constant fear of the Maratha blow. The villages which were most affected were Ghatoli, Ganeshpura, Namena, Alopa, Barkheri and Gurnawad.²

Holkar raids Chechat.

In 1804 Holkar raided the pargana of Chechat and subjected the region to a great loot and rapine. The precautionary measures of Zalim Singh were of no avail. The town and the pargana were given up to unbridled plunder and the people were relieved of everything they possessed. Grain was taken out from the Khais and Khas (grain pits) and taken away. Holkar himself headed this raid. After the storm had passed off, Zalim Singh tried to heal

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1861 Basta No. 3,1 Talikon la Bhandar No. 3.

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1861, Hukmone ki Talikon le Khat.

the wounds of the poor peasantry by advancing them money for buying bullocks, grain and seed and for rebuilding their burnt houses.¹

Holkar's Raids.

The Holkar's raids were always a difficult problem for Zalim Singh. Sometimes the Holkar operated with the Sindhia but mostly he organized and carried out his raids independently. In the pargana of Dayabhav he was with the Sindhia. Zalim Singh's forces encamped hardly at a distance of two miles,¹ and kept in a state of readiness at Gagron, had the desired effect. Like Sindhia's men, Holkar's men also began to realize that a raid would not pay and the resistance would be effective. Like Sindhia, he, therefore, accepted Zalim Singh's offer of hospitality presents for himself and his officers, and gifts for his men; and marched away.²

Zalim Singh's precautions against raids.

Zalim Singh was not in a position to come into an open conflict with Holkar. He was too shrewd and careful to precipitate an action or take risks. However, he could not be indifferent to the sufferings and hardships to which his people were repeatedly subjected by Holkar's raids. The Maratha troops used to enter the state of Kota from the southern routes. Beyond Mukandara pass the territory of Kota extended as far as Chaumahala. Mukandara was the natural defence but the boundry of the Kota state east and west of Chaumahala had no natural defence. There were only small rivulets to be crossed. Kali Sindh, of course, was a pretty big river, but they all became fordable from November on wards tili the monsoon broke out. The routes were all easy. As the Maratha troops used to enter the Kota territory by crossing the fords Zalim Singh made proper arrangements for guarding all these points. He established choukis, each consisting of 10 to 15 men, at each point.

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1861. Hukmon ki Talikon Ke Khate.

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1863 Basta No. 5 Bhandar No. 1.

Their duty was to watch the movements of the Maratha troops if any, far beyond their stations to the south of Kota boundary, and make as detailed a report as possible to Zalim Singh as to their strength, composition, intentions and directions of movements. They were also required to alert the people immediately north of their chaukis. The information would thus be carried from village to village and a large area used to be put in a state of preparedness. Cash and ornaments used to be buried under ground, cattle used to be concealed in jungles, homes used to be deserted by the people and here and there groups of people would assemble to face the plunderers, if possible. Organized raids by big troops could not be frustrated by these measures but small foraying parties used to be encountered invariably, and, as the losses were sustained by both sides, the small raids were not always paying to the Marathas. When big forces were noticed to be moving, Zalim Singh himself used to march at the head of his troops and invariably used to announce that he was proceeding on a shooting excursion. Shooting, of course, he did, but what actually used to happen was that he would encamp at a small distance from the Maratha camp, contact the Maratha chiefs and their officers and encourage his own men to fraternize with the troops of the Marathas, and thus take the wind out of the Holkar's sails by putting him and his men in good humour and create an atmosphere of friendliness. This he did a number of times not only in case of Holkar but also in case of *Sindhia and the other rapacious Maratha adventurers who used to descend on the Kota territory every now and then*¹.

Ramdin, Malhar's Military officer expelled from Gangrad.

In the summer of 1813 Ramdin, a military officer of Malhar Rao Holkar reached Gangrad (now in the Jhalawar state) at the head

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1. Kota State Archives of s. 1863 Basta No. 5 Bhandar No. 1.
 Kota State Archives of S. 1860 Basta No. 3 Bhandar No. 21/1
 Kota State Archives s. 1833 Basta 1 Bhandar No. 1
 Kota State Archives of s. 1866-70 Basta No. 74, Bhandar No. 1.

of about 500 troops, posted his men at the key places and demanded rations for his troops from the biledar of the place. The latter was asked to supply immediately one hundred and eighty maunds of gram (15 manis, one mani equal to 12 maunds) and an equal quantity of maize and barley, eighty four maunds of flour, twelve maunds of linseed, six maunds of ghee, six maunds of gur, four maunds of salt and five hundred rupees in cash for "lo and dana" for horse. He was threatened that if an immediate supply was not made, the town would be given up to plunder and ravage. The guns were turned at it and all ingresses and egresses were guarded by Ram Din's men. Ram Din also demanded the evacuation of the thana of Gangrad. The biledar very politely replied that if a parvana from Malhar Rao Holkar was produced, the demand would be complied with. At this Ram Din got furious and ordered his men to charge, but by this time Mehrab Khan, a military officer of Zalim Singh, who was posted at Gangrad on defence duty, had filed his troops and collected all able bodied residents of the place, and ordered a charge of the Maratha looters who realizing that discretion was the better part of valour, took to their heels; but while doing so they carried away five businessmen of the town with them.¹

A ransom of Rs. 400/- was offered to and accepted by Ram Din for the releaze of these five businessmen but they were not releazed. While leaving Gangrad, Ram Din succeeded in persuading Alam Khan, who had been posted at Gangrad, to desert Kota service and join him.²

Ram Din had been operating in this area for some time. While fleeing away from Gangrad, he was checked by a posse of Sikh savars who had been posted at Udel for defence purposes. The two savars who protested against Ram Din using the route were over-

1. Kota State Archives of s. 1863-70 Basta No. 74 Bhandar of varki Khatas.

2. Ibid.

powered and their horses were captured. Then Ram Din ordered the capture of the remaining twelve horses of the defence party and carried away the Sikhs as captives, and demanded Rs. 700/- as ransom for their release. He had been operating in that area for about one year, looting and ravaging here and there and running away where vigorous defence was put up. The details of the raid of Udel as reported by hawalgir of Udel are as follows :—

Property looted :—Cash Rs. 157/-, crops damaged ten bighas, bullocks captured nine, horses captured twelve, besides Udel several other villages like Sankara, Jetakheri, Talawadi, Kherkeda and Salarya were pillaged and revaged. From the last village the Marathas took away 24 maunds of wheat.¹

Holkar raids Sanganer.

Sanganer (Mewar) and the neighbouring parganas of Jahazpur, and Itoda were under Zalim Singh in the beginning of the 19th century. Holkar raided them in 1809 and the Kota troops, posted there for protection, were not adequate for resistance. Troops were, therefore, moved up and down from Sanganer to Bhilwari and from Bhilwadi to Shankarpura under the command of Rode Khan. A few parties of Kota troops consisting of 60 or 70 men continued to move about in the parganas to drive away the forayers and to restore confidence among the people.²

Holkar in Pach Pahar and Rajpura

As late as 1817 Holkar's troops were molesting the pargana of Pach Pahar south of Kota. On receiving the news, Zalim Singh detailed a number of men to observe and report as to the strength of the troops and the extent of the damage done. He was no longer afraid of Holkar now, and if need be, was prepared to encounter

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1863 1870, Basta No 71 Bhandar of Do varli Khatejat

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1866 Basta No 71 Bhandar No 21/1 Topkhana,

him. Soon after this, the news came that Holkar's troops were operating in Rajpura and intending to march in the direction of Kota. Zalim Singh ordered his Adjutant Madari Khan to contact Holkar's officers and dissuade them from their intention, Madari Khan was followed by Adjutant Maddu Khan on the same mission. Zalim Singh was now reorganizing his army on a new pattern. His officers were given English designations. He was prepared for all eventuality but he was not the man who would precipitate. He was rather slow in taking drastic action. Persuasion and flattery were the guiding principles of his life. Military action was considered by him an unavoidable deviation.¹

Zalim Singh gives military aid to Holkar

It seems that Jaswant Rao Holkar was in difficulty in 1808 and requested Zalim Singh to lend him military aid. Zalim Singh responded generously and under the command of Nawab Mir Khan sent his cavalry, infantry and artillery which served Holkar for four months and 26 days, from November to early April.² Zalim Singh's troops proceeded by the route of Sonara, Pachpahad, Lashkar (a village), Baisonda, Bhilwada (a village), Jhalarapatan, Kanwada, Chorikhedi, Sarvar, Dhopla, Hanotia and Dug. It is clear that Holkar was operating somewhere near Dug.³ The Kota troops encamped at all these places and travelled the distance of about 66 miles in 11 days.

Zalim Singh as mediator between Holkar and Mewar

The tribute payable by Udaipur to Holkar had fallen into heavy arrears and great pressure was being brought by Holkar through his representatives on Udaipur to make immediate payment. The Udaipur representative, Munshi Rupram negotiated under instructions from Zalim Singh and said to Holkar's agent, "Zalim

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1871. Basta No. 11/2. Talhane ka Bhandar.

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1805 Basta No. 65 Bhandar 21/1 Topkhana ki do varki.

3. Ibid.

Singhji will decide and we will abide by his decision in respect of the payment of tribute by us. Raj Sahib's efforts alone will prevail. Through his good offices every thing would be all right. We will be guided by his will. The whole settlement rests with him."¹

Zalim Singh sends presents in Holkar's camp

Mir Khan was already with Holkar operating in Mewar. Under him were the troops supplied by Zalim Singh. For them Zalim Singh sent small presents and for the officers under Mir Khan as also in Holkar's *lashkar* he sent shawls. When they were presented, Seth Balarao, Holkar's pay master made the following observation, "Raj Sahib Zalim Singhji loves us sincerely and sends us best gifts, but we only offend him and make repeated blunders."² Similarly, Mir Khan also was full of praise for Zalim Singh.³

Holkar takes Bhilwada with Zalim Singh's help

In 1809 Holkar attacked Bhilwara. The troops supplied by Zalim Singh fought under him and did very well. Bhilwara was taken and the Nawab gave credit for this to Zalim Singh's troops and expressed thanks to Zalim Singh.⁴ It is not clear what was Zalim Singh's object in helping Holkar against Bhilwada. Probably Zalim Singh himself had too many troops and their maintenance was a problem for him. He had heard repeatedly that the Maratha troops were often mutinous due to their salaries being in arrears. Often there was chaos and disorder and the life of Holkar himself seemed to be in danger. At Chaukri Kuria a laughable but extremely pitious scene occurred. The Mahawats of elephants in Holkar's *lashkar* whose salary was in arrears for several months and who

1 Kota state Archives of s. 1866 Fagnn Budi 5 Hallaran ki Khabran Mukam Kanod म्हां को त्रफ को जवाब, सवाल श्री राज साहब की मुर्जो होगी जी रीति ठहरेगा । राज साहब के पगा न्याव छ ।

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1866. Hallaran ki khabran. Mu-ran Chaupdi Kuria.

3. Ibid

4. Kota state Archives. Ibid.

were, therefore, starving, left the elephants to themselves and went away in search of some other employment. The uncontrolled elephants were roaming about in the camp and there was no one to take care of them.¹ At another camp the discontented and angry troops surrounded the Holkar's tent and stopped all water supply to him to force him to make immediate payment.¹ So complete and perfect was their picketing that not a drop of water could reach Holkar. These stories used to reach Zalim Singh quite in time through his spies, and a shrewd man like him could not but derive lessons from them. He, therefore, kept his troops employed, though not in his work, yet in the service of his friends. In fact this facilitated their maintenance.

Lachhamabai expects help from Zalim Singh

In 1811 the troops of Holkar began to starve. They mutinied repeatedly and demanded payment of their salary but no payment could be arranged. It was not possible to keep them employed in raids either. If it were possible they could feed themselves. In fact the most serious problem facing Holkar's troops in the second decade of the 19th century was how to keep body and soul together and the equally serious problem for Holkar was whence to pay them or how to keep them profitably employed. Peace and order was being restored all round and no raid was possible with impunity. The treasury of Holkar was not replete with money either. Lachhamabai was at this time in Holkar's camp. She was faced with a difficult situation and her heart really bled when she witnessed starving troops. When she saw helplessness all round she remarked "Now Maharaj Jaswant Rao's troops are in disorder and starving and Kakaji (Zalim Singhji) alone can restore order and can set things right. Now we are marching towards Kota and when we arrive near about the city, he will come to our rescue and will ask Lalaji (the wakil of Sindhia and Holkar) to advance us money for which I shall mortgage some villages."² It may be noted

1. Ibid

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1866 Ashad sudi 11 Mukam Hamir garh ka pas.

that Jaswant Rao Holkar used to address Zalim Singh as Kaka,¹ and naturally, therefore, Lachhmabai also referred to him as such.

POLITICAL RELATIONS WITH THE HOLKARS

Social courtesy to the Maharao

All communications addressed by the Holkars to the Maharao used to be very courteously and respectfully worded according to the Indian tradition. Tukoji Holkar addressed Maharao Guman Singh as “सब उपमा विराजमान महाराव जो. In the body of the letter they used the word “RAJ” to mean ‘you’ or “Your Highness.” Words of pressure or urgency were employed in the communications sent to Zalim Singh or his son and not to the Maharao himself.² Even the Peshwa’s letters to the Maharao used to be very politely worded. Raghunath Rao addresses Maharao Umed Singh as “श्री महाराजाधिराज श्री महाराजा उमेद सिंहजी and uses the traditional form saying Raghu Nath Bajirao “के आशीर्वाद वांचने and ends his letter “विशेष क्या लिखिए”³ In the letters of the Maharao the following expression used to be invariably employed. “For the conduct of all affairs here we look up to you.”

Correspondence with Zalim Singh

Similar courtesy was not invariably observed in case of Zalim Singh. Naturally some distinction had to be made between the ruler and the regent even though the latter was very powerful and was acting as the defecto ruler. Raghunath Barjrao addresses Zalim Singh as “सिद्ध श्री सर्व उपमा लायक श्री राज राणा जालमसिंह जो जोग्य” He uses the honorific epithets because he was in great difficulty and stood in desperate need of military aid from Zalim Singh and other chiefs in order to maintain his position against Nana Fadnavis in 1774.⁴

1. Tod

2. शिदिगाही इतिहासांची साथने भाग २ ।

3. Ibid

4. Ibid. II. Lelbank. 15

While refering to the Kota state, the Holkar uses the word “महारावजी श्री गुमानसिंहजी की सरकार”¹ Tukoji Holkar while addressing Zalim Singh drops the epithet “सर्व उपमा विराजमान” and simply says “सिद्ध श्री राज श्री जालमसिंहजी जीग”.² Hurku Bai Holkar writes only “राज श्री राज जालमसिंह” and drops even the suffix “जी” but later on says “हरकु वाई होलकर आशीर्वाद येथील कुशल जाणो न स्वकीये कुशल लीहित वसिले चाहिजे विशेष”³ But in another letter she is more polite and says “राजश्री राज जालमसिंह भाले” but his son is addressed as simply Madho Singh Jhala.⁴ Ahalya Bai Holkar and Kashi Rao Holkar also did not use the word “जी” and addressed the regent simply as “राजश्री राज जालमसिंह भाले” and sometimes only “राज श्री भाले”⁵ Soon after, however, Kashi Rao began addressing him as “राश्री राज जालमसिंहजी भाले” Jaswant Rao Holkar addressed simply as “राजश्री राज जालमसिंह भाले” without the epithet “जी” but always ended the letters saying ‘बहुत काये लिहिणे हे विनंती’⁷ But from 1800 onwards letters began to be addressed more politely. Now Zalim Singh becomes “जालमसिंह जी” though not invariably.⁸ This was necessary because political situation in the country was changing. Jaswant Rao now began to address Zalim Singh as “Kaka”.⁹

Zalim Singh congratulates Jaswant Rao on the birth of a son

When Jaswant Rao Holkar was operating in Dayabhao in 1806, his wife was with him and expecting a child. When the

1. Ibid. II, Lekhanka 75

2. Ibid. IV, Lekhanka. 80, 81

3. Ibid. V, Lekhanka 106

4. Ibid, II, Leknanka 108

5. Ibid, II Lekhanka 109, 110, 111, 112, 113, 114, 115 and 116.

6. Ibid II Lekhanka 120, 123, 127 and 129

7. Ibid II Lbkhanka 138, 139, 140, 141 and 148

8. Ibid Vol. II, Lekhanka 118, 139, 140, 141 and 146

9. Kota state Archives of s, 1868, Halkaraon Ki Khabaran (Lachhamabai's remar7s) and Tod

confinement was expected she was removed to Jhalarapatan, where she delivered a male child. Zalim Singh sent gold bangles, rich clothes and sweets for the mother and the child, and congratulated Jaswant Rao Holkar in most flattering terms. The regent was ever particular in adhering to the customs of his state and, therefore, the clothes and the ornaments were all of Kota style and strictly according to the local custom.¹

Zalim Singh supplies bullocks to Jaswant Rao Holkar

In 1803 Holkar requested Zalim Singh to supply him 1,000 bullocks. Zalim Singh sent him 100 bullocks immediately from his own stables and arranged the purchase of the rest at various places. Within two months he completed the quota.² The bullocks were required by Holkar for drawing guns. Holkar's artillery was pretty heavy. He had Indian gunmen who could handle big guns; besides there were European generals in his army who put great reliance upon artillery action.

Zalim Singh supplies jute to Holkar.

In 1803 Zalim Singh was encamped at Kalyanpura situated on the bank of Parbati, six miles to the east of Baran, on Baran Shahabad road. From there he wrote to Zalim Singh asking him to send Rs. 2,000/- at once, adding that as jute was selling as cheap as Rs. 12/- per maund in the state of Kota at that time, a good quantity might be purchased and despatched. The demand for cash was immediately complied with and jute was purchased at a number of places in the pargana of Baran and neighbouring places. It was despatched partly in bullock carts and partly through the banjaras. The article was required by Holkar for feeding his guns.³ In 1804 Zalim Singh supplied 20 maunds of gun powder for Holkar's guns. The maund was equal to 40 seers of 80 tolas each.⁴

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1. Kota state Archives of s. 1863 Basta No. 5 Bhandar No. 1
 2. Kota state Archives of s. 1861 Basta No. 99 Bhandar No. 3
 3. Kota state Archives of s. 1860-69. 3 and 1861. 69. 3
 4. Kota state Archives of s. 1861 Basta No. 69 Bhandar 3

Escort for Holkar's family.

In 1804 Holkar was encamped on the Raghogarh side and some ladies of his family were with him. They wanted that they should go and stay at Shahabad, probably in the fort which was in possession of Jhala Zalim Singh. Besides, the route also lay through the Kota territory, Holkar, therefore, requested Zalim Singh to do the needful. Raghurao escorted the ladies from Holkar's camp and Zalim Singh deputed Pandit Ganpat Ram, a courtier of his to escort them. He had 10 sawars and 10 footmen with him. The ladies were safely escorted to Shahabad and Zalim Singh incurred an expense of Rs. 115/- on this account³. In the same year some ladies of Jaswant Rao Holkar's family also were staying at Kota, and when they proceeded from Kota to Mandalgarh (Mewar), Zalim Singh ordered an escort of 200 horse and one nakib.¹ Next year the ladies visited Kota, and Zalim Singh presented to them dresses of the value of Rs. 1,000/-².

Zalim Singh's presents to Holkar family.

Zalim Singh used to send friendly presents to Jaswant Rao Holkar, Malhar Rao Holkar II and Ahalya Bai from time to time. In 1804 Zalim Singh sent nazar to Jaswant Rao Holkar through Mohammad Nur Khan, who took the articles and cash to Holkar's camp. An expenditure of Rs. 213/- was incurred for the journey of Mohammad Nur Khan and his party³. Jaswant Rao Holkar was very fond of using 'lohban' oil, for the manufacture of which Kota was then famous. Zalim Singh used to supply this article to Holkar now and then. Each time one seer of oil used to be sent⁴. Jhala Zalim Singh was much interested in articles of comfort and luxury and used to purchase and store a number of them for his personal use, as also for giving presents to his friends. Once he sent to Holkar

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1861 Basta No. 69 Bhandar-8

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1862 Basta No. 70. 74-1

3. Kota state Archives of s. 1861 Basta No. 69 Bhandar-8

4. Ibid

a fine looking glass which the latter very much liked and admired¹. In 1809 Zalim Singh got an excellent silver hauda prepared. It cost him several thousands of rupees, because the hauda was covered with pretty thick silver plates. It was placed on a noble and beautiful elephant and presented to Malhar Rao Holkar II². In 1809 a pair of jewelled bracelets, a necklace and a sarpech and a jewelled 'turra' were purchased by Mir Khan for presenting them to Malhar Rao Holkar II. The cost of these articles amounted to Rs. 6,000/-³. On various occasions, Zalim Singh presented rich dresses and ornaments to Ahalya Bai Holkar and her general Tukoji Holkar and other officers.⁴

Jaswant Rao Holkar's response.

Though not equally obsequious, Jaswant Rao Holkar was responsively polite to the Maharao of Kota and Zalim Singh. On the occasion of Makar Sankranti of 1803, Jaswant Rao Holkar sent til and sugar to the Kota ruler with a letter expressing affectionate regard. Similar tokens of regard used to be sent to Zalim Singh on certain occasions. Jaswant Rao sent his representative to offer condolence to Zalim Singh on his mother's death.⁵

Zalim Singh collects tax for Holkar.

On the death of Jaswant Rao Holkar a cenotaph was built in his memory in the parganas of Sat-Mahala. This region was under the jurisdiction of Zalim Singh, who had taken possession of it a few years ago. He followed the same policy in the neighbouring territory of Holkar as he did in case of Shahabad, which was under Sindhia before Zalim Singh captured it. The position of Sat-Mahala was the same as that of Shahabad. The only difference being that Zalim Singh only exercised his control and jurisdiction on

1. Ibid

2. Ibid

3. Kota state Archives of s. 1866. Basta Mutphartik Krishna Bhandar

4. Kota state Archives of s. 1866 Rajmahal ka Bhandar Halkaron ki khabaran,

5. Kota saate Archives of s. 1836 Basta No. 62 Bhrndbar-1

this region. He used to collect the revenue and forward it to Holkar, probably retaining his collection fee. Thus Holkar was the *de jure* ruler of this region but Zalim Singh was the *de facto* master. On Jaswant Rao's death the Holkar Sarkar, therefore, imposed a tax of 2 per cent on the agriculturists to meet the cost of the cenotaph which was being raised. Zalim Singh's son, Madho Singh, who had now begun to act as *faujdar* had the courtesy to collect this tax and forward it to the Holkar government¹.

Zalim Singh keeps himself posted with up-to-date news regarding Holkar's camp.

As in Sindhia's camp, Zalim Singh used to keep several reliable and intelligent informers in Holkar's camp also. They used to send daily news from the camp regarding every detail of the affairs and events which took place there. These people were not spies but a sort of representative officials who had easy access to men and officers of the camp, including even the Holkar at times. They were paid regularly by Zalim Singh and the news they sent was considered trustworthy and reliable. They used to be paid about Rs. 10/- per month which was not a very low salary at that time². Besides, Zalim Singh used to send his representatives of higher status under the excuse of offering nazars or making presents or payments or for the exchange of views on current affairs. They used to bring still more reliable and correct information for Zalim Singh. For instance, Pandit Ganpat Rao was sent to Jaswant Rao's camp to deliver a hundi of Rs. 20,000/- and Purohit Moji Ram was sent to pay the salary of the Rasala, probably Kota horse, serving under Jaswant Rao Holkar, or he might have gone to pay Jaswant Rao's rasala, and the money thus spent might have been adjusted against tribute payable by Kota³.

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1615 Basta No 121 Bhandar.3 (Talikan ka)

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1663—70 Basta No. 74 Bhandar. 1

3. Kota state Archives of s. 1866 Basta No. 69 Bhandar. 3

Zalim Singh promises help in distress

In 1809 Zalim Singh was in Holkar's camp. Jaswant Rao had died and his wife and generals were finding it difficult to control the discontented and clamorous hordes. The Pindaris were out of control. The generals were plotting and intriguing, the troops were starving. The enterprising and ambitious elements wanted to take advantage of the chaotic conditions. The camp was full of factions and groups, and even sincere supporters were feeling helpless in putting things right.¹ Hafiz Ahmaddullah, a loyal supporter of Jaswant Rao's widow approached Zalim Singh and requested him to meet the Bai Sahib and help to save the situation. Zalim Singh readily responded and rode all alone without a single attendant to the Holkar's tent where near by a number of leading military officers and sardars had assembled. They all waited at the court tent, and Zalim Singh, Nawab Kapur Khan, Seth Balaram, Tantiya Alegar, Diwan Ganpat Rao and Ittal Pant went to Bai Sahib's tent. From behind the curtain, she made a fervent and eloquent appeal to the veteran Zalim Singh in these words, "Jaswant Roaji addressed you as Kaka (Uncle) and the first subedarji addressed you as brother. Now Malhar Raoji is, therefore, your adopted son. Hence you should defend his honour and prestige."² Zalim Singh gave a very chivalrous reply. He forgot all the troubles and hardships and humiliations to which, during the long period of half a century, he had been subjected. He did not care to feel his wounds or even to look at the scars but said, "I will render such service as I can to your honour. All my resources and I myself are at your disposal." The Bai said that she had apprized Tantiya of everything and he would submit to Zalim Singh all that she had said. Tantiya told Zalim Singh that the domestic affairs of Holkar would be conducted strictly in accordance with the instructions and directions of Zalim Singh.³ Regarding other matters Tantiya gave the following details :—

1. Ibid

2. Kota state Archives of r. 1866. Rajmahal Ka Kagaj

3. Ibid

1. To consider the payment of tribute due to Poona.
2. Where should the troops march from this place.
3. Where should Mir Khan's troops encamp after his settlement with Jaipur.
4. Some Holkar troops are at Guger but Ingolia does not like it and has shut himself in the fort. How to dispose of this matter.
5. The present expenditure exceeds the income. How to solve this difficulty.
6. To what part of Mewar should our troops and artillery march.
7. Maro Hari is about to arrive. On what terms to negotiate with him.
8. How to tackle the Pindari problem.

Zalim Singh heard these details with remarkable patience and attention and said "I will consider over all these problems and give my view to Seth Balaram and Nawab Kapur Khan."¹

Zalim Singh was then offered itra and pan, and taking leave of the Bai he returned to his tent. He ordered Adjutant Madari Khan to stay where he was and to put the Risala in order and then return.²

Zalim Singh's reaction, a guess

When Zalim Singh was 31 years old and in full flash of his youthful ambitions, his ruler, Guman Singh, after full realization that his end was at hand, made a dying appeal to Zalim Singh, saying "My son Umed Singh is now your ward and you his guardian. Please protect his honour and prestige and conduct the affairs of the state with care and ability and devotion." This

1. Ibid

2. Ibid

opened up in the imagination of Zalim Singh vistas of hopes and ambitions which were more than fulfilled by 1809. He had been a defacto ruler of the Kota state during the last more than forty years and had wielded tremendous influence and power, and as such, not only inside the state but outside in the courts of Holkar, Sindhia, Panwar, Peshwa and in almost all the states of Rajputana, his name was well-known. He was not unknown even at the dying court of Delhi or the rising court of Poona. When the widowed Maratha Bai made a fervent appeal for help to Zalim Singh, he was 70 years old, but age had not dulled his ambition and, if anything, it had whetted it. That day Zalim Singh must have looked ahead in imagination and must have thought again and again that the fortune was once more smiling on him. Could he not treat Malhar Rao II as he treated Umed Singh of Kota and utilize the immense resources of Holkar's state for the furtherance of his personal ambition, and play the role of a powerful regent both of Kota and Indore, and thus dominate both Malwa and Rajasthan. But his prudence and forethought must have made him wise at once. He knew that the British East India Company was spreading its tentacles far and wide and its power was irresistible. The age of personal enterprise and adventure had gone. Peace and order were being established and what Zalim Singh could now achieve was to retain what he had got and strengthen and consolidate his position inside the Kota territory.

ZALIM SINGH, AND EVENTS IN HOLKAR'S CAMP

The following day Zalim Singh was informed that the troops of Holkar and Keshorao Mahadi had reached Chhabra and were attempting to seize the fort there, and that Raghunathrao Ingolia had completed his preparations for defence. He had sent a deputation to Raja Jai Singh of Raghogarh imploring him to render military aid, in case Guger was also besieged by the combined forces of Holkar and Kesharao, but the invaders had waylaid the deputation

and were also trying to seize the Raja, if possible. The member of the deputation had fled away and were hiding themselves for safety but the Raja was still powerful enough to defend himself. Zalim Singh now sent word to Bai Sahib through Hafiz that, as commanded by her, he had considered over the problems facing her and he would like to discuss them with Tantiya, Sethji and Nawab Habibullah Khan. The message was sent in the morning and the reply was that the officers would wait on him in the afternoon. Naturally Zalim Singh did not like this indifference and suspected that his advice and direction were probably no longer wanted. Meanwhile he offered rich presents of ornaments and dresses for Malhar Rao Holkar. Soon after this, Rao Bal Krishna came to meet him and told him that the deceased Holkar had left behind three widows and that the Bai Sahib was one of them and that she wanted Jaswant Rao's nephew to succeed him, and in this she had the support of Sadruddin Hawaldar, who was commandant of five thousand horse. He further said that Rao Bala and a couple of Sardars were also the members of that clique, but that the mother of Jaswant Rao was of different mind and her supporters were Seth Balarao, Tantiya Alegar and Gafurkhan. There was an idea of putting Jaswant Rao's nephew on the throne but at present he was under surveillance. He also said that Seth Balaram and Tantiya were not sincere and Balaram was very much afraid of Mir Khan, though he had great confidence in Zalim Singh. Zalim Singh listened to this talk with close attention and quickly came to the conclusion that the fortunes of Jaswant Rao Holkar could not be restored. He said to Rao Balkrishna, "Well, Panditji, unity leads to success and dissensions cause the disruption of Kingdoms." Balaram, Tantiya and Gafurkhan, the three nominees of Bai Sahib, never turned up to take guidance from Zalim Singh and it seems that he felt no longer interested in the domestic affairs of Holkar.¹

Tika dresses presented to Malhar Rao Holkar

When Malhar Rao Holkar II had seated himself on Jaswant

1, Kota state Archives of s, 1866. Raj Mahal ke Kagad

Rao's throne, the Maharao of Kota, Jhala Zalim Singh and a few Maratha jagirdars under him sent tika presents for him. The presents from the Kota ruler consisted of one jewelled sarpech, one pearl necklace, one rich dress and one ordinary dress, besides an elephant and a horse with silver accoutrements. Zalim Singh's presents consisted of a gold-hilt sword, a gold tipped shield and a gold scabbard dagger.¹ The Maratha jagirdars, under Zalim Singh, namely Fakirji Gharpode, Narayan Raoji and Nawab Rajan Khan, also offered suitable presents. The following day Zalim Singh's camp was fed and feasted by Malhar Rao Holkar and there was a dance of girls. The Holkar requested Zalim Singh to come all alone for a private talk on the following day. The next day when Zalim Singh left for Holkar's camp Pandit Lalaji and Fakirji Ghurpadiya wanted to accompany him as usual, but he told them that he had been ordered to come alone and, therefore, they need not bother.²

ZALIM SINGH'S SOCIAL RELATIONS WITH THE SARDARS AND OFFICERS OF THE HOLKAR

Maratha officers in Kota

There were a number of Maratha officers who were formerly in the service of the Holkar and later accepted employment under Zalim Singh. It has already been mentioned that Pandit Nanaji was one of the Maratha sardars whose tact and intelligence Zalim Singh greatly admired and, therefore, maintained friendly relations with him by presenting him frequent gifts on all suitable occasions and also benefitting him in several ways with the material resources of the Kota state. His son, Bapu Hari was treated by Zalim Singh with great political affection and Hari served Madho Singh as private secretary. Through him, Zalim Singh kept himself well informed as to the events and policy at the Holkar's court or camp.³

1. Kota state Archives of s, 1869. Raj Mahal ke Kagad.

2. Ibid,

3, Kota state Archives of s, 1863-70. Basta No, 74 Bhandar No. I,

Jadurao was posted at Dharnavada and was in charge of defence chauki there. Dharnavada was surrounded by the population of soondhias who were a community of habitual plunderers and dacoits. Pandit Jadurao's duty was to watch the activities and movements of these people, and, so far as possible, prevent them from devastating the area. For this purpose, he had under him about forty men. When any damage was done, it was his duty to afford relief to the sufferers and help them to rehabilitate. Pandit Mahipat Rao held a very important post of trust. He was in charge of Krishna Bhandar or the state treasury which was housed inside the Palace. No outsider so far had held this key post. Zalim Singh wanted men of his own trust and confidence and, therefore, he appointed Mahipat Rao as treasurer.¹ Rao Govind Alekar was a brother of Tantia Alekar who was one of the leading sardars in Holkar's camp. Rao Govind was in Zalim Singh's service and received a salary of Rs. 200/- per month and his duty was to do miscellaneous jobs.² Pandit Baluji and Tantiya both used to reside at Nanta. Both of them were very trusted servants of Zalim Singh and were very helpful in his dealings with the Holkar. Neemaji Shitole served Zalim Singh with five sawars and received a total amount of Rs. 995/- annually. The sawars performed odd jobs, mostly carrying of Dak.³ Pandit Nagu Rao and Jan Rai Gharpadya stayed at Kota and served Zalim Singh. Pandit Nagu Rao's family, after his death, was granted a monthly maintenance allowance of Rs. 50/-.⁴

Zalim Singh took loans from the Holkar's sardars

Zalim Singh was always in financial difficulty both in respect of his personal expenses as also in respect of the conduct of the state administration. This was due to the fleecing policy of the Holkar and the Sindhia. As he had to spend right and left, he was

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1. Kota state Archives of s. 1866 Basta No. 4 Bhandar No. 3
 2. Kota state Archives of s. 1863-70 Basta No. 74 Bhandar No. 1
 3. Kota State Archives of s. 1860 Basta No. 68 Bhandar No. 3
 4. Kota state Archives of s. 1861 Basta No. 21. Bhandar No. 3,

never out of mud, but among the Maratha business men he had friends who used to lend him money on certain occasions. Pandit Narhar Rao advanced him first a loan of Rs. 15,001/- and then of Rs. 20,001/- and as a security Zalim Singh pawned his personal jewellery. The debt could not be repaid in time and, therefore, the jewellery was sold to Pandit Narhar Rao himself.¹ Pandit Raghoji was a grain merchant who carried on his business not only at Kota but at several important places in the state. A part of his business was to lend grain and seeds to the peasants on "badi" system, that is to lend one maund and receive $1\frac{1}{4}$ maunds at the time of harvest.² As Zalim Singh himself was a great storer of grains, it is not likely that he ever stood in need of borrowing it from the Maratha businessmen, and it seems that his borrowing of money and selling of jewellery also might be a mere ruse. He might have done it to convince Holkar that he had no money, so much so that he had to part with his jewellery, and he carried on the transactions with the Maratha business men purposely. Through them he meant the story to reach the Holkar so that it could carry conviction. The above two instances have been quoted just to illustrate that the Marathas were carrying on business in the Kota state and Zalim Singh used to borrow money from them. But there were a number of Dakshani Brahmans doing prosperous business in the state.

Facilities given to the leading Marathas

In order to thicken his relations with the leading Maratha sardars in the Holkar's court, Zalim Singh used to provide them several kinds of facilities. Pandit Lakshman Rao was a petty jagirdar of Kosa state but it did not suit him to reside in the village of his jagir. Zalim Singh, therefore, permitted him to stay where he liked and further helped him by having the land revenue collected by the officials of the state. For collection duties, Zalim Singh used to employ generally Sikhs, because they were not soft to the pea-

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1816. Basta No. 3, Bhandar No. 3.

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1669 Basta No. 4, Bhandar No. 3.

sants. The man who was put in charge of collecting revenue from Pandit Lakshman Rao's jagir was Bariam Singh, a Sikh subedar.¹ The jagir villages of this man were situated in the pargana of Relawan, and were assigned to Zalim Singh for the payment of debts which were advanced to Lakshman Rao. The revenue collected from these villages used to be credited towards the payment of the debt. In the year 1803 there was a general drought in the pargana of Relawan. Instructions were, therefore, issued that the chaudhari and qanungo of the pargana should make enquiry on the spot and remit a reasonable part of the land revenue. During the days of the marriage of a Maratha jagirdar of Manoharthana, twenty men were deputed to keep watch at his house and some furniture was also lent.² The father-in-law of Ganpat Rao, Diwan of Jaswant Rao Holkar, who used to reside in village Julmi was once in difficulty owing to disturbances by certain troops. His family was, therefore, shifted to Suket and local government officials were directed to see to their comforts.³ Parvanas were issued to the forest officer of Girdharpura area that no grazing fee should be charged from certain Maratha sardars.

Zalim Singh and the leading sardars of the Holkar

Among the sardars in Hloker's camp, Alekar Tantia was very intimate with Zalim Singh, who used to pay him two thousand rupees per year, evidently for using his good offices when need arose. When his brother was married, Zalim Singh spent an amount of Rs. 1,075/10/- on presents and dresses.⁴ Alekar and general Dudrence were both pretty intimate with each other. Alekar used to visit Zalim Singh at Kota now and then, some-times on political mission and sometimes to demand tribute on behalf of Holkar. The presents on the occasion of the marriage of Alekar's

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1. Kota state Archives of s, 1860 Basta No, 43 Bhandar 21/1.
 2. Kota State Archives of s. 1861. Basta No. 69. Bhandar No 3
 3. Kota State Archives of s. 1866-70 Basta No. 74, Bhandar No 1.
 4. Kota state Archives of s, 1863-70, Basta No. 74, Bhandar No. 1.

brother were sent by Zailm Singh through general Dudrence.¹ It has already been mentioned that his brother was in Zalim Singh's service. Balaji Raghunath enjoyed a great confidence of Zalim Singh and was useful to him in many ways. He was, therefore, permitted to hold several villages on mukata system according to which he had to pay Zalim Singh a fixed amount annually in respect of these villages. The money thus fixed was considerably less than the total revenue these villages were expected to yield and the balance was the benefit accruing to Balaji Raghunath.² Nazim Khan was an intimate friend of Zalim Singh. Whenever he visited Kota, Zalim Singh used to be very hospitable to him and used to present him saropav and other tokens of intimate friendship, so much so that even his menial servants used to receive gifts. His family stayed somewhere in the Kota state and their maintenance was a charge on the revenue of the state.³ Nazim Khan was probably a Pindari chief, and Zalim Singh considered it necessary to placate him by maintaining his family and also by occasional presents and gifts. This was done to save the Kota territory from damage and devastation.⁴ Seth Balaram was the treasurer of the Holkar. When the latter was in financial difficulty he used to advance money. He, therefore, enjoyed a great importance in the Holkar's camp and exercised great influence on the Maratha leader. Zalim Singh's relations with Balaram were very intimate. He treated the treasurer with lavish hospitality whenever he visited Kota and extended the same treatment to his brother Khyaliram.⁵ Trayambak Sadashiv was also treated with special regard. He was granted exemption from the payment of certain taxes due to the Kota state.⁶ Pandit Darkuji resided in the Kota state and was recipient of frequent favours from Zalim Singh. Now and then he used to get pretty good amounts of money from

1. Ibid.

2. Ibid.

3. Ibid

4. Ibid

5. Ibid

6. Ibid & Kota state Archives of s. 1815, Basta No. 121 Bhandar No 3

Zalim Singh for maintaining himself. He was very helpful in keeping contact with several leading Maratha sardars in the Holkar's camp.¹

Maratha nobles and Jagirdars at social functions

Zalim Singh invited eighteen leading Maratha sardars attached to Holkar to his daughter, Ajab Kanwar Bai's marriage. Prominent among them were Appaji Mama, Gopal Rao Bapa, Ganesh Tantia and Janardan. The last named was the Fauj Bakhshi of Holkar. All the eighteen sardars came with big retinues and gave rich presents to the bride. Zalim Singh also gave rich presents to the guests at the time of their departure.² Similar social courtesy was mutually observed when Zalim Singh celebrated his grandson, Madan Singh's marriage. When the officers of the Holkar celebrated the marriages of their sons and daughters or performed Yajnopaveet ceremony of their sons, Zalim Singh used to respond to their invitations with great generosity. He sent rich presents to Pandit Gangadhar Rao, Ramarao and Mahipat Rao on the marriages of their daughters and the Yajnopaveet ceremony of their sons. On the Yajnopaveet ceremony of the sons of Pandit Madhorao and Krishnaji Tantia rich dresses and ornaments were presented as marks of intimate relations.³ Pandit Bhau was an intimate friend of Zalim Singh and so were Pandit Gangadhar Hari, Mahipat Rao and Pandit Jagannath. He gave cash and dresses when Bhau celebrated the marriages of his daughter and grandson, and sent four thousand rupees on the marriage of his nephew. He gave two thousand rupees to Pandit Mahipat Rao when he proceeded on the pilgrimage to Braj and Gaya.⁴

ZALIM SINGH'S RELATIONS WITH THE PESHWAS AND BHONSALAS

Relations with the Peshwas

The first contact of the Kota ruler with the Peshwas was

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1. Kota state Archives of s. 1845 Basta No. 121. Bhandar No. 9.
 2. Kota state Archives of s. 1859 Basta No. 4
 3. Kota State Archives of S. 1854 Basta No. 20 Bhandar No. 21/1.
 4. Kota State Archives

quite happy. Baji Rao I, while marching to Delhi in 1738 and encamped at Taraj in the Kota state, was supplied with necessary rations by Zalim Singh's grand-father, the faujdar of Kota. The Peshwa reached Delhi, but, after raiding its neighbourhood, returned by the route of Bhopal. This might have given the impression to the Jhala faujdar that the Peshwa was not powerful enough to strike at the root effectively. Therefore, when Bajirao was checked near Bhopal by the Nizam, the Maharao of Kota proceeded at the head of large troops to help the imperial cause.¹ He must have done it on the advice of his faujdar. The Maharao was encountered on the way by Holkar and had to return to Kota discomfited, but after defeating the Nizam, Bajirao descended on the city of Kota and imposed a fine of ten lacs on the state.² A few years after this, the Peshwa gave Kota as a jagir to the Holkar and the Sindhia and therefore, Zalim Singh's political relations were directly and mainly with these two chiefs and only indirectly with the Peshwas. Besides, Poona was too distant for a close contact. However Zalim Singh tried to maintain some contact with the Peshwa also. When the Peshwa's grand mother visited Kota for the darshan of the Mathuradhish, she was treated with great marks of respect, and the hospitality and courtesy extended to her on behalf of the Maharao of Kota were reminiscent of the visit of Radhabai, Bajirao I's mother to Jaipur, when Sawai Jai Singh was the ruler there. Zalim Singh sent invitation to the Peshwa and to a number of his sardars at Poona to grace the occasion of Ajab Kanwar Bai's marriage. Though Poona was too distant, Zalim Singh's power and eminence were quite well known in the Peshwa's court. When Raghunath Rao was frustrated in his attempt to seize the Peshwa's throne and marched to the north to secure military aid for further attempt, he addressed very flattering letters to Zalim Singh and the Maharao, requesting both of them to render assistance against Nana Fadnavis.³

1. Brahmendra Lekhank 131.

2. (a) Brahmendra Lekhank 136

(b) Kota State Archives of S. 1851. Basta No. 21. Bhandar No. 21/2

3. Phalake. Vol. II Lekhank 14 and 15

It may be noted that both these letters were written in the dialect of the Kota-Bundi states and are couched in the Rajasthani style.

His relations with the Bhonslas

Zalim Singh had no political relations with the Bhonslas, but he maintained social relations with them and used to send them customary presents, consisting of ornaments and dresses and fancy articles. On the marriage of Bhonsla Sena Sahib, Zalim Singh sent dresses and certain ornaments for several members of the Bhonsla house. Zalim Singh was encamped at Narayanpura near Gagron in January 1806. From there he despatched Baba Mokhamgiri with a small retinue of fifteen sawars with the presents which consisted of a sarpech and a Champakkali (necklace) costing Rs. 3,740/10/- and several costly costumes. Some clothes were purchased at Nagpur for presentation.¹ Kota was famous in Zalim Singh's times for "Laharia and Chundari" saris and dupattas. Zalim Singh had some excellent saris made and some white muslin pieces dyed in various fancy colours for which also Kota was then famous, and sent them as presents to the Bhonsla.² In 1809 Baba Mokhamgiri was again sent to Nagpur with presents. Mokhamgiri informed Zalim Singh from Nagpur that the Bhonslas were very much pleased to receive the presents which were very much appreciated and that Raghuji Bhonsla, to express his regard and love for Zalim Singh, put on the turban as soon as it was presented to him and so did his son (Baba Sahib) nephew (Apa Shib) and Nana Sahib. This was done in the presence of the vakils of several other chiefs and, therefore, it heightened the prestige of Zalim Singh in their estimation, and they remarked to each other that there was great brotherly affection between Raghuji Bhonsla and Zalim Singhji, and the Bhonsla himself observed that there was complete identity of interests between him and Raj Sahib.³ (Zalim Singh).

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1863, Basta No. 1 Bhandar No. 1 Nandgaon ki Ovari

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1860, Basta No. 68 Bhandar No. 3

3. Mokhamgiri's letter to Zalim Singh.

At about the time when Mokhamgiri had the interview with Raghuji Bhonsla, the latter received a letter from Daulat Rao Sindhia about the affairs of the Pindaris. In this respect there was consultation between the Bhonsla and the Baba and the latter was asked to communicate his views to Zalim Singh.¹ Mokhamgiri wrote to Zalim Singh as directed and said "A letter has been received here from Maharaj Daulat Raoji saying that negotiations are proceeding through Rajrana Zalim Singhji about Karim Khan Pindari, who is prepared to pay a ransom of five lacs. Raghuji Bhonsla does not view it favourably. He says, "Between me and Raj Sahib there are brotherly relations and I am of opinion that he should not feel interested in these negotiations. The Pindaris are the common enemies of all. Now that God is annihilating them, why should Raj Sahib try to prop them up? Have they ever contributed to the happiness of anybody, and who can say that after release they will maintain with us friendly relations or not. Raj Sahib should not, therefore, lend them a helping hand in their difficulty. I am, therefore, sending you this pair of news-bearers. I also think that if Mir Khanji, Sindhia and Holkar release them out of greed, they will prove a source of trouble to all of us again."²

It is clear that in 1809 some Pindaris had been rounded and captured. Karim Khan was the leader of that group but Sindhia, Holkar and Mir Khan were sympathetically disposed towards him and desired that he should be released on payment of a huge fine of five lacs. Zalim Singh was most in the confidence of the Pindari gangs and Karim Khan's offer or Sindhia's suggestion might have been made to him. Zalim Singh also enjoyed the confidence of the East India Company and could, therefore, serve as a liaison between East India Company and the Maratha chiefs and Mir Khan.

LALAJI BALLAL

His ancestry

The family of Gulgule vakils of Kota is well known in the history of the Marathas. Parasnis has given a brief account of the

1. Ibid

2. Ibid

family and Sardesai has improved on it. Balaji Yashwant Gulgule was the first Sindhia vakil posted at Kota. He belonged to a Saraswat Brahman family, hailing from the village of Achar in Malvan taluqua of Ratnagiri district (Konkan). There is no material to show as to how Balaji Yashwant came in contact with the Sindhia. The earliest mention of his name is in a letter dated the 16th November, 1742 addressed to him by Ranoji Sindhia, but he must have begun to function as a vakil much earlier than 1742. This is clear from Malhar Rao Holkar's letter dated the first March, 1743 in which he tells the vakil that he was not a new man in Kota and that he had knowledge of the method of the distribution of the tribute (among the Sindhia, the Holkar and the Panwars) and, therefore, he should do it according to the precedent.¹ Probably Balaji Yashwant was responsible for keeping record of the distribution of the Kota tribute, as also of territory assigned to Sindhia in 1732.² Balaji Yashwant acted very tactfully at Kota and was probably instrumental in the treaty of 1737 concluded between the Marathas and Kota; and this date marks the commencement of the rise of the Gulgule family. The services rendered by him were appreciated by the Maharao of Kota, who conferred upon him an Udak Chak (rent free land) of six hundred bighas. To this was added a jagir of village Barkhedi in the pargana of Urmal. This was approved of and confirmed by the Peshwa in his order of the 24th February, 1738. Long before, Balaji Yashwant had been appointed Sindhia's vakil at Kota, his family had begun to reside in that city.³ Though mainly the vakil of the Sindhia, Balaji Yashwant served also the Holkar with equal ability and devotion till his death, sometime between July 1759 and January 1760.⁴ He had no male issue and, therefore, adopted Lalaji Ballal to inherit his property and to succeed to his post. He seems to have obtained

1. Phalke- Vol. I Page 6, footnote 9.

2. Phalke-Vol. I pp. 2-3 footnote No. 4

3. Phalke -Vol. I pp. 3 footnote No. 4

4. Phalke, Vol. I pp. Lekhanka 219 and 220.

the sanction of the Sindhia for his adopted son to succeed him as the Vakil, and thus was set up the practice of hereditary right to the post. Lalaji Ballal succeeded to the post and position of his adoptive father, sometime before the beginning of 1760¹

Life long friendship of Zalim Singh and Lalaji Ballal

Like Lalaji Ballal, Zalim Singh also had inherited the position and privileges of his adoptive father, about a couple of years earlier than 1760. Thus both these rising young men started their career almost at the same time in a strikingly similar manner, and came in close contact with each other in the summer of 1761 when they both, accompanied by Akhairam Pancholi, the then Pradhan of Kota, visited Holkar's camp on the border of the Kota state to request him to support Kota in its impending fight against the ambitious and aggressive Maharaja Madhosingh of Jaipur.² During these negotiations, the two enterprising youths might have understood and admired each other's talent and tact, and the mutual understanding, thus established, developed into a life long friendship which continued to grow in depth and intensity, and which even the change of empire could not disturb. Lalaji Ballal and Jhala Zalim Singh symbolize a rare unity of heart and talent, which lasted throughout their lives till death separated them, when they had lived full four scores of years. In the eighteenth century which is a period of chaos and anarchy, it is difficult to find two politicians, so sincerely and so continuously devoted to each other as Lalaji Ballal and Jhala Zalim Singh. During the long period of over half a century of their career there were a series of difficult situations, the heavy fines and tributes imposed on Kota, the ever-accumulating arrears, urgent demand and pressure for immediate payment, threats of devastating invasions, continual and destructive raids and forays by the Sindhias and the Holkars or other smaller maratha leaders, and the

1. Fhalke Vol. I Lekhanka 220

2. Kota state Archives of s, 1818,

ups and downs in the fortunes of the Maratha houses. On every occasion, there was the possibility of a friction or divergence of opinion, but the two friends never differed from each other. Zalim Singh continued to respect and admire the views of Lalaji Ballal and the latter, as a representative of the supreme power, was ever helpful in solving the difficulties of Zalim Singh. In fact, in the solution of every problem, internal or external and administrative or political, Lalaji Ballal was closely associated with Zalim Singh; and while jealously safeguarding the interests of his masters, the vakil was ever so very sympathetic to the interests of the regent and the cause of the state. Evidently his uncommon tact and talent alone could enable Lalaji Ballal to adopt and maintain such attitude during a long period of nerve-wrecking strains and stresses. That he could do it speaks volumes of his tactfulness and sincerity of purpose. In fact, but for this pair of shrewd politicians to guide it, the ship of the Kota state would have floundered in the deep mud of the political chaos of the eighteenth century. Late in their career, in the seventies they were joined by Dalel Khan, a local Pathan, hailing from a small village,¹ in the Tehsil of Aklera. He started as a lieutenant and rose to be the general officer commanding state forces, and came very close to Zalim Singh and Lalaji Ballal. The Khan had a bushy flowing beard and was therefore, referred to as 'Dadhiwala' and the trio of administrators came to be called as "Jhala, Lala and Dadhiwala".² So deeply devoted and loyal was this Pathan to Zalim Singh and so greatly the latter valued his friendship, that on his death the regent observed to Col. Tod. "Sahib, I wish that I had died earlier and had never seen this day."³ No body knew better than Tod that Zalim Singh never wore his heart on his sleeve and his words were meant often

1. The village of Dahlenpur where a wooden takhta is still shown as Khanji Dalelkhanji ka takhata. His residence in Kota is yet known as Dalelkhanji ki Haveli.

2. Kota Rajya ka Itihas Vol. II. p.

3. Todd Vol. II. p.

to conceal his thoughts rather than express them ; but in this particular case he gave a correct expression to his feelings, because he had no political motive at all when he expressed himself so feelingly. The beautiful memorial which Zalim Singh built on the grave of Dalelkhan bears tangible testimony to the depth of the sincerity of his friendly affection. Lalaji Ballal and Dalelkhan both predeceased Zalim Singh, who lived on, bent, broken and blind, till he was eighty five, and died at Chhawani Ramchandrapura, a suburb of Kota. A simple cenotaph near the foot of his towering and massive residence inside the campus of the Maharao's palace marks the spot where this great man was cremated.

Lalaji Ballal's duties as vakil

The duties of the Maratha vakil stationed at Kota were manifold. He was the collector of tribute, envoy of the supreme power and an administrator of the Maratha affairs in the state. He collected the tribute pargana-wise from the Kota state and watched the progress of the collection of revenue from every part of the state.¹ In order to ensure that the tribute was paid in full and in time, it was also his duty to see that it was properly distributed among the Sindhia, the Holkar and the two Panwars. His political duties were of a very delicate nature and he had to be ever alert and watchful. He had strict instructions from Sindhia to send timely information about everything that happened at Kota.² He, therefore, had to despatch correct account of the day to day events at the city, which mainly included the affairs at the court of Zalim Singh and his relations with the Maharao, as also the movements of the Maharao.³ The important events in the neighbourhood of the Kota state were also communicated by the vakil to the Maratha chiefs.⁴ Thus the vakil was responsible for

1. Phalke Vol. I. 31, 33, 96, 98, 103 and 151

2. Phalke Vol. I. 82

3. Phalke Vol. II. 47, and 154

4. Phalke Vol I. p. 158

keeping the Sindhia posted with up to date events in the states of Bundi, Jaipur and Khinchiwara and sometimes he had to report also about the movements of Holkar¹ His administrative duties consisted of controlling the entire Maratha staff in the Kotah state. The Maratha diwan and the Kamavisdars were directly under him. He issued to them detailed instructions for watching the progress of the collection of revenue in the different parganas of the state, solved their difficulties which arose in the course of the performance of their duty and distributed their salaries. Lalaji Ballal must have been a man of uncommon tactfulness. Only, therefore, he could perform all these duties to the entire satisfaction of his master without causing any irritation to his powerful and ever watchful friend, Zalim Singh, and one cannot help admiring this Brahman politician when one glances through the Kaleidoscopic vicissitudes of the period of over half a century (1760-1820) during which Ballal acted his part.

Lalaji Ballal's services to Zalim Singh

The ceaseless problem between Zalim Singh and the Marathas was the payment of tributes and fines which by 1761, when Zalim Singh began to exercise power, had mounted to about seventy lakhs—tremendous amount indeed for a state of small income like Kota. To this was added the amount of unpaid annual tributes which used to be partly or wholly in arrears. As Sindhia and the Holkar were financially always hard-pressed, they used to make pressing and peremptory demands for immediate and regular payments. But Zalim Singh had his own financial commitments. His personal establishment and the pomp he maintained for self-glorification were a great drain on the income of the state. Besides, he had his ambitions and designs in Mewar, on which he was spending with great and reckless extravagance. It was not, therefore, always possible for Zalim Singh to make up-to-date payments, and whenever the demand was accompanied by a threat of raid or invasion,

1. Phalke Vol. I. 173, 174 and Vol. 96 and 265 .

Zalim Singh would find himself in great difficulty. On such occasions he used to turn for help to his friend, Lalaji Ballal, who never failed him. Through his good offices, a number of times the accounts of arrears were brought up to date, annual instalments of payments were fixed and the crises were averted. Lalaji acted also as a banker to both Zalim Singh and the Maratha leaders. Sometimes he was sent by Zalim Singh to deliver the tribute to the Maratha leaders and, on his behalf, offer an explanation for the balance. The Holkar and the Sindhia both used to send him statements of the accumulated salaries of their staff. Very often Lalaji Ballal made these payments and adjusted them against the amount of tribute. If Zalim Singh paid the bills, he did it through Lalaji Ballal, so that he could make the adjustment.¹

Whenever difficult or delicate situations developed and it was necessary to contact the Sindhia, Zalim Singh utilized the services of Lalaji Ballal. He would request the agent to visit the Sindhia's camp with his son, Madhosingh, and assure the Maratha chief of his loyalty to him, or offer him such military aid as he could. This was done when Sindhia sustained a disastrous defeat at Lalsot and Tunga, when he took the Agra Fort and when he captured Ghulam Qadir Rohila and put him to death, and when he became the Vakil Mutalaq of Emperor Shah Alam. Lalaji Ballal, taking Madhosingh with him, met Sindhia on these occasions at his camp at Mathura and conveyed the messages of Zalim Singh and presented

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1836-37 Basta No. 62 Bhandar 1

Kota state Archives of s. 1829-40 Bohron ka Kagad. Bahi p. 17

Kota state Archives of s. 1844 Basta No. 5 Bhandar No. 1.

Kota state Archives of s. 1863, Basta No. 5 Bhandar 1

Kota state Archives of s. 1866, News latter dated chaitra shukla 12 from Camp Hatana.

Kota state Archives of s. 1836-37. Basta No. 62, Bhandar No. 1

Kota state Archives of s. 1840-1 Basta No. 65, Bbandar 1.

Madhosingh to him.¹ The agent was also helpful in maintaining social relations with the Maratha chiefs and their leading sardars. Lalaji Ballal was with Zalim Singh when the latter offered the 'Tika' presents to Malhar Rao Holkar.² Zalim Singh's wife was a Rakhi-bandh sister of Ambaji Ingolia, and it was Ballal who took the presents from the Regent to him.³

Zalim Singh, as the Regent of a feudatory state, had to put his troops at the disposal of Sindhia or Holkar, when they were demanded. Twice, when the troops were lent, Lalaji Ballal was sent with them. For this, Zalim Singh paid him a salary of ten rupees per day, Lalaji arranged the sale of daily necessities to the troops and distributed their salary and presented the accounts to Zalim Singh. In fact he was a non-combatant officer who looked after the camp.⁴ Zalim Singh greatly valued the advice and guidance of the Maratha agent, and liked to have him with him during his tour of the state, or when he moved out to Mewar to explore the possibilities of his further rise. In the affairs of Mewar, the Marathas were the main problem and in dealing or negotiating with them, Lalaji Ballal's advice and help was naturally most valuable, because he was considered equally reliable both by Zalim Singh and the Maratha leaders.⁵

Zalim Singh's social Relations with him

It was but natural that with such a sincere and helpful friend, Zalim Singh's relations were very close and cordial. In fact, Zalim

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1. Kota state Archives of s. 1846 Basta No. 8 Bhandar No. 1.
Kota State Archives of s. 1841 Basta No. 26, Bhandar No. 6.
Kota State Archives of S. 1846 Bhandar No. 3
Kota State Archives s. 1846 Basta 121 Bhandar No. 3
 2. Kota state Archives of s. 1859. News letters from Holkar's camp of Agahan Budi 12.
 3. Kota state Archives of s. 1846 Bhandar No. 8
 4. Kota state Archives of s. 1839, Basta No. 64, Bhandar No. 1.
Kota state Archives of s. 1840-41 Basta No. 56 Bhandar 3.
 5. Kota state Archives of s. 1838-5 Basta No. 61 Bhandar 1.

Singh treated him as his brother, and Ballal reciprocated his regards with equal affection. Ballal gave a grand feast on the occasion of the marriage of Zalim Singh's daughter and offered rich presents not only to every member of the family but even to the menial servants of the Jhala, and attended the wedding, accompanied by about three hundred men, and stayed at Nanta for over a week as Zalim Singh's guest.¹ When the Maratha agent celebrated his son's marriage, Zalim Singh responded to his friend's invitation with equal enthusiasm, and joined the marriage party with a retinue of 423 men. The party went to Rampura and returned to Kota after twelve days.² The total number of the party was about two thousand. When Zalim Singh married his grandson, Lalaji Ballal had died, and his son Lala Ramchandra occupied his post. Zalim Singh continued the same cordiality of relations with him also. Ramchandra was invited to the wedding of Madan Singh, and he responded to the Regent's invitation with his father's enthusiasm and with the same pomp and pageantry.³

Lalaji Ballal's successors

Ballal's successors deserve a brief notice. His son, Ram Chandra inherited his post, and had hardly occupied it for a few years, when the Maratha power came to an end. As a true and sincere friend of his father, Zalim Singh gave him a decent jagir of the value of about Rs. 30,000/- per year, in recognition of the continued friendly help he had received from his worthy father. Ramchandra was succeeded by Motilal, who worked as a member of the Kota state council for a number of years. His son Pandit Ganpat Rao enjoyed the hereditary jagir, and was also a revenue officer in the state. He was succeeded by his brother, Pandit Purshottam Rao who was a deeply religious man and very popular for his integrity

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1846 Bbandar 3.

Ajab Kanwar Bai's marriage Account.

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1854 Basta 29, Bbandar 21/1

3. Kota state Archives of s. 1880-2 Jhala La gharu Kagad.

and straitforwardness. His nephew and successor Pandit Chandra Kant Rao was in possession of the jagir till 1948 when it was resumed by the Congress Government.

THE MARATHA JAGIRDARS UNDER ZALIM SINGH

How Jagirs were given

It was in the interest of Jhala Zalim Singh to keep the vakil, diwan and Kamavisdars of the Sindhia and the Holkar in good humour, because it was through them that he dealt with the Maratha leaders, and solved the most difficult and delicate questions. Zalim Singh, therefore, gave them good jagirs and thus linked their interests with the Kota state. Besides, the Hada jagirdars who did not like the dictatorial role of the Jhala and the consequent eclipse of the Maharao, were all hostile to him and constantly conspired for his fall or death. It was, therefore, to counter-balance their power that he created Maratha jagirdars in the state. As his own creations, they were naturally loyal to him, and as representatives of the supreme power, exercised great influence in the estimation of the public. The Sindhia's vakil was given the jagir of the village of Barkheri in the pargana of Urmal. Later he was given a share in the Mukata of a number of villages in the pargana of Baran, from which he derived a very decent income.¹ Sindhia's diwan, Pandit Balaji Rao also enjoyed a jagir of a prosperous village of Mandola in the pargana of Baran which brought him an annual income of seven thousand.² The Holkar's diwan was similarly the jagirdar of Julmi with a revenue of five thousand. His other diwan, Pandit Shankerji held the jagir of Rampura and Ratawad in the pargana of Baran. His annual income was ten thousand.³ Pandit Balaji Janardan and Pandit Abbaji, though not equally important or helpful to Zalim Singh, were assigned a jagir

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1845. Basta 121. Bhandar 3 Talikon ka.

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1938 Khanta jagirdaran.

3. Ibid

of two thousand each. Pandit Balaji Janardan held Relana in pargana Ramgarh and Abhaji Kishanpur, and Baba Abhaji held also the jagir or Maurya in Tafa Kaithuh.¹ Sadashiv Ballal, a close relative of Lalaji Ballal also enjoyed a small jagir of three thousand.

The Sindhia and the Holkar were interested in having men of their own confidence as jagirdars in the Kota state. As cash payment was difficult to make punctually and regularly, Sindhia and Holkar both used to have jagirs assigned to their officers in the Kota state. This served the double purpose. The payment to the officers was insured and the influence of the Marathas in Kota state increased. Some of these officers settled down in the state and sent reports to their chiefs about the internal affairs, particularly with regard to the collection of tribute. With his tactfulness, Zalim Singh gained the confidence of most of them and they were more helpful to him than to their chiefs. Later on when the Maratha power came to an end, most of them became full-fledged jagirdars of Zalim Singh and transferred their loyalty entirely to him. A few of these jagirdars were learned pandit, not interested in politics at all.²

The total jagirs held by the Marathas

In the year 1782, the number of villages held in jagirs by 39 Maratha sardars was 71 and their total value was Rs. 2,80,000/-. The details given indicate that jagirdars were spread all over the Kota state. Zalim Singh's policy was that they should not very often meet together, and formulate a common policy of any action. The Maratha jagirdars were treated with special favour and were exempted from the taxes which other jagirdars had to pay. They were either fully or partly exempted from the payment of taxes like bhaint, begar, jamdari, kuldi, bighodi and nyota and remission was

1, Ibid

2, Phalke Vol. I. letter No. 280i

granted to them in times of drought or other calamities.¹ In return for these jagirs, the Maratha sardars rendered military and political services to Zalim Singh when demanded. Pandit Tantiaji was asked to lead troops to Sheopur, Indargarh, Karvad and Khatauli for the suppression of trouble which had broken out there, and he was also sent to meet Appaji with Bakshi Shivilal and Akhairam on a political mission. Similarly, Lalaji Ballal was sent to the Marwar side at the head of some troops.² Pandit Appaji was sent to the region of Narsinghgarh and Manoharthana where the Grasia plunderers had caused wide spread disturbances. Under him were the sardars of Kotries, several jagirdars,³ state horse and infantry, Pathan platoons, Pindaris, Deccanis, sebandi troops and artillery. These forces succeeded in suppressing trouble and establishing peace and order in that region.³

TRIBUTES AND OTHER IMPOSITIONS PAYABLE TO THE MARATHAS

Zalim Singh inherits financial difficulty

In about 1765 when Zalim Singh took over, the reins of the administration of the Kota state, the Maharao stood committed to pay to the Marathas the staggering amount of about sixty lacs. Zalim Singh, therefore, commenced his career as a faujdar in great financial difficulty and had to battle against it throughout his life. Soon after Kota accepted the supremacy of the Marathas, Bajirao I imposed upon Kota a fine of ten lacs for the Maharao's attempt to help the imperial cause against him, when he tried to fight with Nizam near Bhopal in 1738.⁴ Again a fine of twenty lacs of rupees was imposed when Jayaji Appa, while besieging Kota, lost his arm.

1. Phalke Vol. II. Lekhanka 168

Kota state Archives of s. 1845 Basta No. 121 Bhandar No. Talikon ka

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1832 and 1834

3. Kota state Archives of s. 1863-70 Basta No. 74 Bhandar No. 1

4. Maratha Itihasauchi Sadhane L. dated 1798

These two impositions amounted to thirty lacs and were never fully paid. Then the huge nazarana of forty lacs was imposed for the recognition of Ajit Singh as Maharao of Kota. A few years later, when Chhatrasal succeeded Ajit Singh, a nazarana of two lacs was demanded. Thus in the course of about 20 years the extra-tribute demands from Kota amounted to seventy two lacs. The state papers do not definitely indicate the amount of annual tribute which might have been fixed at the time when Kota became a feudatory of the Marathas, but certain local entries show that an annual tribute of five lacs was fixed, which was distributed by the Maratha wakil, stationed at Kota, according to a certain proportion, among the Sindhia, the Holkar and the two Panwars. The annual tribute was often in arrear due either to drought or other calamities.

A state account of 1756 shows that Kota had to pay the Marathas a total amount of Rs. 56,90,000/-.² This probably included every thing, the fines and the arrears of annual tribute. During the next four year, the annual tribute, it seems, was regularly paid, but the arrears of 1756 remained unpaid. The Maratha leaders, therefore, demanded immediate payments. Akhai Ram Pancholi and Zalim Singh, who was then about twenty years old, waited upon the chiefs and made payment of Rs. 27,80,000/- and undertook to pay the balance by annual instalments of five lakhs.³ Together with the recurring annual tribute, the total amount annually payable by the Maharao of Kota to the Marathas was ten lakhs.

Zalim Singh managed the finances efficiently

Zalim Singh's difficulty was two-fold, to clear off the arrears and to pay the future tributes regularly.¹ Besides, his soaring ambition involved him in the politics of Mewar, which he wanted

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1813

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1718

3. Kota state Archives of s. 1630 Basta No. 57 Bhandar 1

to dominate like Kota. He lent to the Maharana large amounts of money from time to time to enable him to meet the demands of the Sindhia and Holkar. In course of about twelve years he had advanced to Mewar an amount of about a crore. He got this money by relentless fleecing of his state. The peasants, finding that hardly anything was left to them to subsist on, left cultivating the land and the economy of the state was paralysed. Zalim Singh, therefore, reconsidered his policy, withdrew from Mewar and concentrated on the economic progress of his own state and was thus able to meet the most urgent and pressing monetary demands. He paid the annual tributes almost regularly, and on Col. Tod's request, wrote off the huge amount of one crore which he had advanced to the Maharana.¹

Harassment for payment

Zalim Singh's financial difficulties were chronic, because his commitments were endless. It was not, therefore, always possible for him to meet the demands of the Marathas, who, on account of their difficulties mostly arising out of arrears of the salaries of their troops, could not wait for the fixed date of the payment of the tributes. Sometimes they made very peremptory demands for earlier payment, and when compliance was not made or could not be made, raids or invasions were threatened, and often they were actualized.² Then Zalim Singh had immediately to find money by taking loans by assigning the revenue of certain villages to the creditors, or asking his jagirdars to contribute or he collected money by pawning or selling the state jewellery. After the raids and invasions, there was all desolation and devastation, and Zalim Singh had to spend money and grant relief and concessions to rehabilitate the dislocated peasantry. True, that the Marathas made the raids

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1876. Zalim Singh's letter to Maharana, Udaipur.

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1880 Basta No. 57 Bhandar 1

Kota state Archives of s. 1865 Basta No. 65 Bhandar 21/1

and invasions under force of circumstances, but on Zalim Singh there was a ceaseless strain of encountering the vicious circle of demand, raid, loan and rehabilitation. But he stood the strain manfully and steered the ship of the state with uncommon tact and ability through tumultuous seas, and lived to see the advent of an era of peace and order, though it was not vouchsafed to him to witness an era of progress which he would have so much liked.

CHAPTER VI

ZALIM SINGH AND THE PINDARIS

Pindaris, a class of freebooters

The Pindaris, as freebooters, appeared first in the times of Aurangzeb, when the Mughal power began to decay and the Maratha method of warfare, introduced and perfected by Santaji Ghorpore and Dhanaji Jadav, proved effective against the cumbrous imperial army. In the first decade of the nineteenth century, the Pindaris numbered about twenty five thousand able bodied men, and together with their mounted followers and women and children, their population must have been in the neighbourhood of one lakh. They had no land, no caste and no religion, but an overwhelming majority of them, and their leaders, were Muslims. To begin with, they might have served as auxiliaries who plundered the equipage of defeated and fleeing enemies, but in the beginning of the nineteenth century, they took to the profession of plunder, pillage, and destruction, and, though they mostly operated in Central India, they roamed everywhere in bands of two or three thousand horse, under one or more than one leaders, plundering property, lifting cattle and destroying what they could not carry. They travelled long distances, sometimes sixty miles a day, by most irregular routes, their women riding along with them. They raided and looted in big bands, but always avoided a pitched battle ; and when pursued, dispersed in numerous groups, re-assembling as soon as the pursuit slackened. To discover hidden property they practised all sorts of cruelties and atrocities on their victims. Large areas of villages and towns presented a scene of utter desolation after these

marauders had left. They looted cash, ornaments, utensils and even grain from the underground pits, lifted cattle and set fire to dwellings before they marched on. They were a menace in Rajputana, Central India, Central Provinces and even in the South as far down as Madras. The Pindaris were homeless freebooters, constantly on the move, raiding and roving. They were a recurring pest. As soon as the pillaged peasants would resettle, the raiders would reappear like swarms of locusts and replunder the plundered regions. Now and then they held bazars where plundered goods like jewellery, rich clothes, costly utensils and all other sorts of articles were exhibited for sale. On Dasehra they held their rallies which used to be attended by as many as twenty five thousand horse, and then in several groups they spread out in the various parts of the country for their destructive operations.¹

Zalim Singh's contact with the Pindaris

In the Kota state the Pindaris began to appear in about 1780 and in a few years they became a menace in the southern parganas of the state. The peasants began to leave their homes and fields in search of safer places. Zalim Singh, therefore, issued parvanas for the parganas of Chechat, Ghati and Urmal, assuring the people that everything would be done to protect them from the raids of the Pindaris and that they should do the work of cultivation free from all fear of plunder and pillage. However, the town of Sarola and the villages in its neighbourhood were completely devastated by the raids of the Pindaris. The peasants would not return and resettle unless several concessions in the form of exemption from the usual taxes to the extent of seventy five percent were granted by Zalim Singh. The village of Hathya-Khedi was all desolation as a result of a Pindari raid. Its inhabitants were assured that if they returned and resettled, fifty per cent of the taxes namely Ani, Jamdari,

1. Melcolm Vol, I, pp, 346-50
Sardesai Vol, III, p, 477-79

Pateli, Patwera, and their arrears would be remitted. Seths Mayaram and Chanda were the mukatadars of certain villages in the pargana of Chechat. They represented to Zalim Singh that the villages under them had been plundered and ravaged by the raiders and it was not possible for them to pay the usual instalments of the revenue, because they could not collect it from the peasants. Thereupon, Zalim Singh issued orders that during the next one year no revenue should be collected from the cultivators. Similarly, the village chaukidar and the balai (village revenue peon) were also granted concessions due to the Pindari loot. The towns were so completely ruined and their economy was so severely destroyed that the money lenders and traders of the town of Chechat had to be exempted from gentleman's tax (income-tax) for seven years, and other taxes were stayed for four years. The raiders were bravely resisted by some Rajputs of the Suket district, and one of the Bhumias, while gallantly defending his village, was killed on the spot. Zalim Singh issued a parvana appreciating his gallantry and remitting all the taxes payable by his descendants. The other Bhumias also were encouraged to put up similar defence on such occasions and were assured of all state aid, The Muhommadan population of the village Muhasa in the pargana of Suket, who used to carry on transport work and who were plundered by the Pindaris, were specially assured by Zalim Singh that every effort would be made to protect them in future, and, to compensate them for the damages suffered, they would be exempted from gentlemen's tax and bullock tax. The bullocks were used by them as means of transport. In order to keep Pindaris away from these districts Bakshi Akhairam, at the head of about two hundred Sebandi troops, was deputed to operate in the parganas of Suket, Chechat and Urmal.¹ The Bakshi was authorized to enlist temporary Sebandis from the villages affected. They were paid one and half anna per day as their wages. The eastern pargaha of Shahabad was also equally affected, and so was the pargana of Ramgarh, situated on

1 Kota state Archives of s, 1861 Basta No, 69 Bhandar-3

the north east border. The Pindaris were now and then joined by the Grasias who were also habitual plunderers and dacoits.

Defensive measures of Zalim Singh

Zalim Singh took effective measures to defend the border lands against these raiders, and he succeeded in doing so until they appeared in large swarms like those of locusts, when he had to change his policy from resistance to appeasement. But, for the first twenty years, that is from 1780 to about 1800 he successfully protected the southern and eastern parganas by organizing the local Bhils into defensive bands, each under their own leader and responsible for the safety of a number of villages, and all the bands collectively operating under an officer deputed from Kota by Zalim Singh. In the pargana of Manoharthana, he deputed Pancholi Akhairam and Silhedar Mansingh for this purpose. Bhatt Gopal Nath was deputed to defend the Mukandara pass and Pancholi Vinayak Rao to protect the tank of Ranipura. Pancholi Govind Ram was stationed at Mandi and Bhil Dhan Singh in the pass of Ghoteda. Bhil Jassa was posted at the pass of Man and Kotwal Jhitoram at the pass of Jhunjhuni. Similarly Mithu Singh Mewawat was appointed to defend Ranipura, and Subharam Hada and his brothers were deputed to defend the pass of Ghatoli. All these officers were to stay at the places of their duty, and, when necessary, were to assemble for fighting the raiders. The minas of the village of Luhana and Ituda were organized as a defensive band and were paid six hundred rupees a month. The parganas of Machalpur, Bakani and Suket were defended by specially strong forces and Pandit Ballal Dube, Thakur Sher Singh and Bhawani Singh Rajawat were deputed to operate there. They had about three hundred Sebandi troops under them and an equal number of light horse, and were instructed to follow the very tactics and the strategy of the Pindaris. All the local Bhumia Thakurs, the fighting classes like the minas and Gujars, and other able bodied males of various castes like Rebaris, Lodhas etc. who

abound in this area, were armed with swords and lances and their leaders were furnished with matchlocks. Certain places were selected as points of defence from where information was relayed or where news was sent from the places which were raided.¹

Zalim Singh's policy of appeasing the Pindaris

The last quarter of the 18th century, in the Kota state was a period of general devastation and desolation. Large regions were completely ruined and the peasants were scattered. Their dwellings had been destroyed, the grain pits had been dug out and consumed, cattle had been carried away and the people had been subjected to unnameable and unheard-of cruelties and atrocities. Every where there was rack and ruin. This was the result of the Maratha system of depredations, which was in vogue during this period. The Pindaris were largely the product of this system. They were professional criminals without home or hearth, living on just what they could lay their hands on, during their plundering operations. Now they got cash and ornaments and lived on them comfortably for a few days, now they got just old rags and broken utensils and found it difficult to pass even a week in camp. Their leaders were comparatively more comfortable but they also had to face difficulties at the hands of their followers, who, when their salaries were in arrears and when they could not get a chance to plunder, would molest their leaders and sometimes even threatened to strangle them to death, though hardly a leader was ever actually killed. A prudent man like Zalim Singh could easily see that the Pindaris were really not only the product but also the victims of the general ruination, and, if settled they could take to peaceful professions and prove even helpful and serviceable to him. When he saw that the Pindari raids occurred with malarial frequency, and constant mobilization of troops and the ceaseless watchfulness of defensive measures by local hands were nerve-racking, he tried the policy of friendliness and appeasement.

1, Kota state Archives of s. 1845 Basta No. 121. Bhardar No. 3.

As the Pindaris had no ambitions higher than mere subsistence by plunder, and suffered from no sense of any self-respect, and enjoyed no social status, they very easily succumbed to Zalim Singh's friendly rapproachments and monetary baits. It will not be out of place here to observe that Jaswant Rao Holkar who had several Pindari leaders in his service did not permit them to sit down in his presence. He kept them standing and spoke to them not directly but through some officer or a courtier of his. Daulat Rao Sindhia, however, treated them with high honour and conferred on them lands and titles which greatly irritated the Holkar. In fact Jaswant Rao did not like the growing power of the Pindaris and was thinking of extirpating them as soon as proper time came. When he met Daulat Rao, he told him that the Pindaris were socially a very inferior class and should not, therefore, be pampered by undue honour and attention. Zalim Singh Jhala was too shrewd to offend any body unnecessarily and, therefore, while realizing that the plunderers were a class of low people, he treated them with regard and extended to them all possible favours and concessions in return for their abstention from raiding Kota.

From amongst the Pindaris he selected such persons as commanded certain following and invited them to settle in the border parganas of the Kota state, both in the south and the east, as respectable citizens, more honoured than peasants, in fact enjoying the rank and status of petty jagirdars and Bhumias, getting fixed and regular income and with very little care and responsibility to maintain themselves.

The Pindari chiefs who were of reasonable frame of mind responded to the generous call of Zalim Singh, who gave them good jagirs for subsistence in the parganas or Urmal, Suket, Sarola, Ghotali, Chechat, Ghati, Manoharthana, Mangrol, Barod, Sangod, Baran, Delanpur etc. In this manner, by 1796 forty three Pindari leaders of minor or major importance were settled in the different parts of the state and each one of them had to supply, for the

service of the state a fixed number of horse which was determined generally by the size and income of the jagir, as also by the status of the leader concerned. The jagirs were distributed all over the state. No two Pindari leaders held contiguous jagirs and each Pindari leader was settled in the neighbourhood of a Rajput jagirdar, so that the latter could watch the activities of the former and forward timely reports to Zalim Singh, and, when necessary, could himself take action to prevent the Pindaris from doing any harm to the pargana. Between 1790 and 1791 the 43 Pindaris held 51 villages in jagir, yielding an annual revenue of 63,700 rupees, a furnished 266 horse for service. Of them eight were Hindus and the rest Muslims.

The majority of these jagirs were situated in the parganas touching the borders of the territories of Holkar and Sindia and the main duty of the jagirdars was to prevent the raids of the Pindaris whose irruptions ganerally used to take place from the sides of Holkar and Sindhia. Evidently, therefore, the position of these Pindari jagirdars from their own point of view was not enviable. The Pindaris were engaged by Holkar and Sindhia as auxilliaries and marched in advance of their troops to create havoc and break resistance, and thus facititate the operations of the Maratha army. The Pindari jagirdars had to perform the duty of preventing and repelling the bands of their own class, and their forces were generally looked down by the homeless marauders, and the Maratha chiefs also were not very kindly disposed towards them. In return for their services, Zalim Singh extended to them many favours and concessions and treated them with great sympathy and kindness.

The concessions to the Pindari jagirdars

The Pindari jagirdars were allowed to keep to themselves 2/3 of the produce of reserved grass lands and were required to give only 1/3 to the state, but this applied only to the small areas. In respect of bigger areas the Government share was 1/2. The grain meant for personal use was not taxed and wood was supplied free

for the construction of houses. Certain Patels of the Pindari jagir villages were required to pay only 1/3 of *nazarana* due from them. When revenue could not be collected by the jagirdar and the peasants deliberately avoided payment, Zalim Singh deputed government officers to help the jagirdars. Some Pindari jagirdars were allowed to keep to themselves the entire produce of the reserved grass lands in their jagirs. In appreciation of special services on certain occasions, Pindari jagirdars were allowed to hold lands free of rent. Pindari Gul Mohammad of village Borha enjoyed such rent-free land for a number of years. When the clerk of Hiru Pindari fled away to Sheopur Baroda, which did not belong to Zalim Singh, his return (extradition) was arranged by him. A number of Pindari jagirdars were exempted from the payment of taxes named *Bhom-barar*, while several others were required to pay only one half of it.¹ Pindari Ramjani of Gajanpura enjoyed exemption from all the taxes known as *bighori*, *jamdari*, *choudhari*, *bhom* and *pateli*. The *hawalgir* of Baran attempted to collect the taxes notwithstanding this order, on which Zalim Singh issued him a strict warning not to repeat it in future.² Similar exemptions were granted to a number of Pindari jagirdars but the name of Chhitu jagirdar of Godhya in the pargana of Urmal figures several times in the papers. The *hawalgir* of Jhalrapatan was addressed that "Chhitu was exempted from several taxes but the pargana officers were harassing him with other demands, therefore, it should be so arranged that the complaint may not recur".³ If we may hazard a guess, is it not possible that this Chitu might be probably the notorious Chitu, who together with Karim Khan operated in several provinces of India. Unfortunately, however, there is no more evidence than two or three *paravanas* of this nature, issued in favour of Chhitu. Besides, Chitu was too great a leader to care for the jagir of one village.

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1545 Basta No. 121 Bhandar 3.

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1864 Basta No. 3 Bhandar 3.

3. Kota State Archives of S. 1564 Basta No. 3 Bhandar No. 3.

unless of course, this might have been the humble beginning of his dazzling career.

Zalim Singh sent suitable presents to most of the Pindari jagirdars on occasions of marriages or births of sons, and they also felt honoured in offering him reciprocal presents on similar occasions. Zalim Singh believed in social contacts, and he achieved more by contacts and concessions than he could do by force. He also appreciated the Pindaris' dash and valour and whoever exhibited them in a remarkable degree was suitably rewarded.

Leaders of Pindaris

Some Pindaris carried on their plundering raids independently in small or large bands, but a great majority of them operated under one or more leaders. There were intelligent and experienced marauders possessing power of organization and leadership and some of them were men of uncommon valour and dash. The most leading chiefs were Cheetu, Imambakhsh, Qadarbukhsh, Dosh Muhammed, Wasil Muhammad, Kareem Khan, and Mirkhan. In the closing years of the first decade of the nineteenth century, these leaders and those of lesser importance were attached either to the Sindhia or the Holkar with their hordes which numbered more than four or five thousands in case of each leader. Those who belonged to Sindhia were called the Sindhiashai Pindaris while those associated with the Holkar were known as the Holkarshahis. The leaders possessed some land either assigned to them by their Maratha chiefs or acquired by themselves and confirmed either by the Sindhia or the Holkar. But these lands were just barely sufficient for the maintenance of the families of leaders. Their followers depended for their subsistence mainly on plunder and, therefore, had to live on a precarious means of livelihood. The Pindaris were employed by the Maratha chiefs as auxiliaries who marched in advance of their troops, created a terror among the people and prepared ground for a thorough and systematic pillage. The auxiliaries, and their leaders were expected to help themselves, and

were not paid by the Marathas, but when they were not in operation and were encamped in the territories of their Maratha chief, they were not permitted to plunder, and were paid a salary at the rate of about four annas per day. This was then a decent daily wage and sufficient for daily food of a Pindari and his pony. The Sebandi troops of Sindhia and Jhala Zalim Singh of Kota received a salary of three or four rupees a month, but the salary of the Maratha troops were often in arrears.¹

Of the above leaders, the first five, though very important in the history of the Pindaris, were not in any way connected with Zalim Singh, and therefore, deserve just a passing notice. Chetoo commanded the largest following and was most dreaded. While operating in Central India, he was closed in upon by the British Armies. He fled from place to place, but was restlessly and relentlessly pursued by the British troops. Separated from his band, and with one single devoted follower, he was hiding in a recess in the deep forests of the Narmada, where a tiger pounced upon him and killed him.² Imam Bakhsha was an ordinary leader who never acquired any eminence. He surrendered to the British and became a pensioned sardar and passed his days in Bhopal. Qadar Bakhsha was one of the chief leaders in Holkar's service. He surrendered to the British towards the conclusion of the Pindari war and was settled in the district of Gorakhpur.³ Dost Muhammad and Wasil Muhammad were the sons of Hira Pindari and were both adherents of Daulat Rao Sindhia, though not consistently obedient. Their Chhaoni (cantonment) was fixed in Eastern Malwa. Dost Muhammad died in 1816, and Wasil Muhammed was delivered to the British, after much hesitation by Daulat Roa. When he found that his escape was impossible, he swallowed poison and died on the spot-at Ghazipur.⁴

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1. Malcom Vol. p. 351-65.
Tood, Vol. II, personal narrative p,
 2. Malcom, Vol, I, p, 360 -64
 - 3, Malcom, Vol, I, p, 350
 4. Sardesai Vol, III p, 479
Malcom, Vol, 1, p, 056--57

Zalim Singh and the Pindari Leaders—Karim Khan

The Pindari leaders either plundered the Kota borders independently or operated as auxiliaries of the Maratha chiefs. Two of these leaders stand out most prominently and deserve a fuller treatment. They were Karim Khan and Mir Khan. Karim Khan was the son of Muhammad Daud, who was the commander of the body of plunderers under Peshwa Raghunath Rao. When twenty years of age, Karim Khan entered the service of Mahadji Sindhia, who promised to settle him in Malwa. He did not stay long as Mahadji's auxiliary, but joined Daulat Rao Sindhia when the latter ascended the throne. After a few years, he left Daulat Rao and offered his services to Jaswant Rao Holkar, under whom he commanded about three thousand horse. He accumulated a pretty large property but feared that Daulat Rao might seize it. He, therefore, opened correspondence with Mir Khan and requested him to arrange an asylum for his family. Mir Khan granted his request but found that he was not loyal, because during hostilities with Daulat Rao, Karim Khan was discovered to be in collusion with the Pindari auxiliaries of Sindhia. Mir Khan, therefore, expelled Karim Khan, who was readily accepted by Daulat Rao Sindhia and created a Nawab. He married a lady of a branch of the Bhopal family, which enhanced his respectability and promoted his interests. When Holkar and Sindhia both were engaged in warfare, he conquered the districts of Ashta, Sehore, Pichhawar, Sa-angpur and Shahjahanpur. He now cherished the ambition of becoming a prince and with that object he enlisted a thousand foot, cast two guns, formed a body of twelve hundred paiga and commanded ten thousand Pindaris. He wanted to seize a part of the Bhopal state but was repelled by Vazir Mohammad. At this stage he was invited by Daulat Rao Sindhia to meet him in his camp. By artful ways, Daulat Rao had lulled him into confidence and had extended to him extravagant promises of creating a separate state for him. He, therefore, came with a few attendants and was received with single honour and everything was done to lull suspicion, but

Sindhia suddenly retired on some pretext and Karim Khan and his followers, including his brother Hiru, were taken prisoners.

Zalim Singh's offers refuge to Karim Khan's mother

A prominent Pindari like Karim Khan could not remain unknown to Zalim Singh, who kept himself informed of the daily events, happening round about his state. But the Regent's intimacy with Karim Khan dated from the day when the latter was imprisoned and his old mother, bent and broken with age, left her home with her property and sought refuge with Zalim Singh,¹ who treated her with all care, consideration and tenderness. She was settled with her pretty large establishment at the village of Belandi in the pargana of Chhipabarod, and instructions were issued to the patel, patwari and the hawalgir of the pargana and the jagirdar of Akawad (near Shergarh) that the men of the old lady's establishment should be allowed to procure, free of tax, all necessary wood from the neighbouring jungle for constructing their huts. At the same time instructions were also issued that surrounding villages be alerted as to the presence of the Pindaris there. Her grandson, Shayamat Khan was also with her. They were both supported by Zalim Singh, who paid a maintenance allowance of twenty four hundred per month, half in cash and half in grain to the old lady, and one thousand rupees to Shayamat Khan who was now the leader of such followers of Karim Khan as still continued to adhere to him.² Zalim Singh treated this youngman with great regard and consideration. He sent him presents now and then and used to receive him honourably whenever he came to meet him. Once he sent him *itra* worth one hundred rupees and on another occasion gave him two hundred rupees as hospitality allowance.³ The youngman did not always stay with his grandmother but went out for operations in Umetwada, Khinchiwada and also in Holkar's terri-

1. Malcolm, Vol, I, p. 070

2. Kota State Archives of s. 1864 Basta 0. Bhandar 0

3. Kota state Archives of s. 1860. Basta 0 Bhandar 1

tory, but naturally he never harrassed the people of Kota. The old lady stayed continuously at Bilendi and was protected by a large retinue of warlike Pindaris, all maintained by Zalim Singh. Of course, he gave them hardly more than three rupees a month.¹ It was a help which put Karim Khan for ever under a deep debt of gratitude to Zalim Singh. Even a Pindari, whose profession was the perpetration of cruelties and atrocities, could not forget that during the days of his helplessness and adversity his mother and son were treated by Zalim Singh with such great love and regard.

Zalim Singh ransoms Karim

Daulat Rao Sindhia kept Karim Khan in prison and for long continued to refuse to release him. At last he was tempted by an offer of five lacs of rupees.² Holkar and Zalim Singh both were interested in securing the release of Karim Khan, but the old Regent took upon himself the great responsibility of standing security for the future good conduct of Karim Khan, so far as the Sindhia's territory was concerned, and exhibited the greatest generosity of furnishing a ransom of five lacs from his own coffers,³ for his release in 1807. In doing so, Zalim Singh showed tactful indifference to the advice tendered to him by Raghoji Bhonsala, who sent him a message that, as the Pindaris were the common enemies of all, no effort should be made to secure the release of Karim Khan.

Karim Khan's brother was Mohammed Nur Khan. He did not stay in Kota but often came to visit his old mother at Bilandi and on these occasions he also met the ladies of Mir Khan's family, living at Shergarh about fourteen miles from Bilandi. In doing so he had to cross a small stream which was not fordable during mon-

1. Ibid,

2, Not six lacs rs Malcolm says. Malcolm. Vol. I. p. 070

3. Tod, Vol. II. p. 1415

Malcolm. Vol. I. p. 370

soon. He, therefore, constructed a bridge over the stream which still exists.¹

After his release, Karim Khan was treated with marks of respect but this did not obliterate the people's memories of his past cruelties. The wounds they had received were too deep to heal. As soon as he regained his liberty, his old adherents rallied round him and he joined Chitu. Though the combination did not last long, it created a most serious sensation through out India. Daulat Rao Sindhia directed Jaggu Bapu to march against Karim Khan, who was attacked and routed at Umetwada, and who wanted to seek refuge in Kota, but the cautious Jhala was anxious to maintain friendly relations with Sindhia and, therefore, entreated his friend, Karim Khan to avoid coming to Kota. Thus Zalim Singh succeeded in maintaining friendly relations with Sindhia and Karim Khan both.²

Now Karim was joined by the whole force of Chitu. Both combined could now command sixty thousand horse. But it was not possible for them to get on well together for long. Karim Khan then became an independent freebooter with several thousand mounted followers. Zalim Singh maintained his old friendship with the plunderer and offered a comfortable asylum to his family and protected his property.³ Karim Khan's family including his sons and a large number of his followers continued to live under Zalim Singh's protection, at a short distance from the latter's camp which he had fixed permanently midway between the fort of Gagron and the city of Jhalrapatan, and where he had been living for the last thirty-years. The site where Karim Khan's family and hundreds of their followers lived came to be known as Pindaran-Ki-Chhawani, and was assuming a permanent shape in 1815 when Col.

1. Ibid

2. Malcolm. Vol. I. p. 371

3. Malcolm. Vol. I. p. 365-371

Tod saw it, He noticed that an Idgah was under construction for the "Villains who, while they robbed and murdered even defenceless women, prayed five times a day."¹

Settled at Gorakhpur

Ultimately Karim Khan sought shelter with Mir Khan (Amirkhan) Pindari, who without any scruple delivered him to Gafur Khad. The latter kept him almost as a prisoner for three years. A few months before the British troops entered Malwa, Karim Khan escaped from Gafur Khan's camp and joined his old followers, and later on Daulat Rao Sindhia again. The British troops were in hot pursuit of him, and, finding that it was no longer safe to remain attached to Sindhia, he again joined Holkar, but he felt so much harrassed and alarmed by the operations of the British corps that he left his family in Zalim Singh's territory and pushed on to join Holkar's army at Mandsore. Gafur Khan who was now an officer in Holkar's camp refused to take him and Karim wandered about forlorn and helpless, and, while concealed in an humble dwelling, was arrested by the British troops. He managed to escape and wandered about as a mendicant for some-time but at last threw himself on the mercy of the British Government at Nimaheda in Udaipur. He was settled in Gorakhpur with his large family and some land was allotted for his support,

Mir Khan

Mir Khan born in 1767 (Hijri 1182) was the son of a Mullah of Sambhal in the district of Muradabad.² When twenty years old (1787) he left home in search of a career with twenty followers and served in Ahirwada and Malwa under Maratha leaders as a sebandi trooper. His followers received three to four rupees a month and himself ten rupees. When the petty state of Bhopal was in tumult, Mir Khan was taken in service there with six horse and sixty foot. He served the state hardly for one year and then joined the ex-

1. Tod. Vol. II. p. 1607

2. Busawanlal p 9

chiefs of Raghogarh state who raised him to the command of five hundred men and presented him a palki. Later on he entered into the service of Balaram Ingolia, who increased Mir Khan's party to fifteen hundred men and made him the commandant of the fort of Fatehgarh.

When he was forced to leave it by the superior strength of an enemy, he joined Jaswant Rao Holkar, in whose service he rose to fame, and became one of the most eminent disturbers of public peace. This took place by the close of the eighteenth century, when he was little over thirty years of age. Jaswant Rao addressed him as his brother and treated him very affectionately. His troops were always in a state of mutiny for arrears of pay and he was often under restraint of his turbulent rebels. At Poona he was seized by his men, beaten and bruised and almost strangled to death with his own turban, fastened round his neck. Jaswant Rao, though he treated Mir Khan with great regard, employed him always at a distance and considered the Pindaris only a body of plunderers. After sometime, Mir Khan left Holkar's service and joined Maharaja Jagat Singh of Jaipur, who required his aid in his contest with the Maharaja Man Singh of Jodhpur for the disputed hand of Krishna Kumari, the daughter of Maharana Bhim Singh of Udaipur, and was largely responsible for her forced suicide. Later he left Jagat Singh and joined Jodhpur at whose instance he killed Sawai Singh of Nagaur by an artful manner. When Jaswant Rao became insane he came to Bhanpura, and, under the pretext of helping the cause of Holkar, carried on extensive plunder in the territory of Raghoji Bhonsla. Now Mir Khan was at the height of his power, and a fakir predicted that he would be a sovereign of Delhi, but he himself suffered from no such notion, and always pretended to help the cause of Holkar. Mir Khan returned to Jodhpur, which had been now reduced to the lowest states of poverty, and

1. Busawanlal p. 9

2. Tod. Vol. II, p. 974-979 and 1463-1493.

Man Singh, therefore, was advised to ask Mir Khan to leave Marwar. He left it, but not without committing some shocking atrocities including the murder of a minister and a renowned priest. During the next two years, Mir Khan kept himself engaged in plundering the Jaipur State. At this time Sir David Ochterlony, at the head of a large British force, entered Rajputana for the suppression of the Pindaris. Realizing that resistance would not avail, Mir Khan accepted the liberal terms offered to him by the British.¹ Lord Metcalfe, in his letter to the Governor General, had outlined the course of policy to be pursued in respect of Mir Khan. He said, "To Mir Khan we might offer a guarantee in perpetuity, for himself and his heirs, of the territories which he at present holds from Holkar, yielding from nine to twelve lakhs pet annum."

"Some provision is necessary to induce and enable him to quit his present course of life, and it is proper that it should consist of the same territories which have hitherto supported him as a pest to the peaceable part of India.

"We might require of him to disband his predatory army, to dispose of his artillery to us at a fair valuation, and to reside quietly and inoffensively on the territories assigned to him under the protection of the British Government, with only such force as might be necessary for the collection of his revenues.

"Mir Khan would, perhaps, require from us a large sum of money, under the pretence of having to pay up his troops before discharging them, but we shall require all our money for other purposes.

"He would also, probably, ask for a grant of territory in our dominions; but it is to be hoped that we need not make such a sacrifice in his favour.

1. Ma colm. Vol. I, Chap VIII, p. 263-278.

“Should he not accept the terms we offer him, he must abide by the consequences of our determination to put down all predatory powers, without having any provision secured to him.”

On the ninth of November 1817 the agent of Mir Khan signed at Delhi, on behalf of his master, a treaty according to which his forces were to be disbanded and the territory wrested from Rajput chiefs was to be restored. The British Government paid him sufficient money for the disbursement of the arrears of pay due to his followers. The lands which he had held from Holkar as the price of his military support were secured to him under the British guarantee as his state.² Mir Khan thus became Nawab Amiruddaula Muhammad Amir Khan, Chief of Sironj, Tonk, Rampura, Nimbahere and other places in Hindustan.

Zalim Singh and Mir Khan

This Pindari leader is invariably referred to as Mir Khan in all the documents preserved in the Kota Archives. Evidently he was popularly known by this name. Col. Tod also calls him Mir Khan, while the other contemporary writers refer to him sometimes as Mir Khan and at other times as Amir Khan. His biographer Busawanlal, a Saksena Kayasth of Lucknow, who was his Naib Munshi or Deputy Private Secretary says that his chief's name was really Amir Khan and not Mir Khan, but he explains why he came to be known popularly as Mir Khan. The Munshi says that the seal of Amir Khan bears the Persian sentence “Khuda khud Mir Khan samanast asbab-i--muvakilra”³, which means that God himself is the steward for the good of him that relies firmly on him. The play on words may have led to the notion that the chief's name was Mir Khan. Whatever might be the reason, the fact is that the Pindari chief was

1. Kaye-Metcalfe Vol. I. p. 329

2. (a) Ibid

(b) Hendley, p. 330-31

(c) Busawanlal p. 462-170

3. Busawanlal. Page 1

known as Mir Khan till he was made the Nawab of Tonk, when he assumed the grandiloquent title of Nawab Amir-ul Daula Mohammad Amir Khan. Chief of Sironj, Tonk Rampura. Nimbahera and her places in Hindustan.

Mir Khan was well known to Zalim Singh from the start of his career as the Pindari chief, and he had great admiration for his dash and pluck. He had also realized that any hostility to him would be ruinous, and friendship with him might be beneficial. In his shrewdness he maintained cordial relations with Mir Khan. In 1801 when Zalim Singh celebrated the marriage of his son, Gordhan Das, who was born of a Muslim wife, he invited Mir Khan and his family to attend the wedding. Mir Khan responded, and was received with all honour by Zalim Singh at a distance of about one mile from the city.¹ He attended a number of dinners which were given by Pandit Lakshman Rao, Bapu Manipat Rao and others in honour of the marriage; and participated in several other festivities. Mir Khan offered presents to Zalim Singh and Gordhan Das and organized a bindori (bridegroom's procession which goes round the city during days preceeding the departure of the marriage party to the bride's place), on which he spent several hundreds.² When Mir Khan left, Zalim Singh gave him rich presents, including rich muslim dresses known as pishwas which were specially prepared for his begams.³ He sent him friendly letters now and then and kept himself posted with most up-to-date information from his camp by means of his news-letter-writers posted there. Zalim Singh considered it very important that the news of daily happenings at all centres of military and political activities round his state should reach him as soon possible, and his arrangements were so thorough that within fortyeight or seventytwo hours he was in possession of news from camps of the Pindaris, Sindhia and Holkar, operating in Central India, Gwalior

1. Kota state Archives of S. 1859- 61 Basta-3 Bhandar--1

2. Ibid

3. Kota state Archives of s. 1861 Basta No. 3 Bhandar--1

or in the states of Jaipur, Udaipur etc. In January 1805. when Mir Khan was operating in Bundel Khand, General Lake offered to make him a ruler of a state worth thirteen lacs, if he accepted the British supremacy, but the chief's ambition was then high and he refused every overture.¹

Meanwhile, Holkar was urging him to join him immediately, because he was hard-pressed by the British. In response to this appeal he marched by the way of Malargarh and Toda in Malwa and came to Kolaras Sipri where he met Ambaji Inglia, a Sardar in Daulat Rao Sindhia's service. The Sardar received him very kindly, and assurances of mutual friendship and mutual assistance were exchanged between them; and Ambaji proposed that Mir Khan's family might stay at Kolaras, where they would be taken good care of. As the pressure of the British was increasing on all sides, and forced marches had to be made, which had made it necessary to find a place of safety for the ladies and children of his family, the Pindari chief accepted Ambaji's offer of hospitality with gratefulness and left his family at Kolaras in charge of Muhammad Shah Khan, his lieutenant.² Mir Khan marched in the neighbourhood of Gwalior and did a lot of plundering there, but in the course of his operations, he learnt that General James of the Bombay army was advancing into Malwa and had written to Ambaji that, as Daulat Rao was an ally of the English, it was highly improper of Ambaji to afford protection to the family of Mir Khan, and that, unless he sent away the family and dismissed Mir Khan's troops left with him, the British army would march against him.³ Mir Khan was then on his way from Gwalior to Bharatpur, and Ambaji did not know what to do. Muhammad Shah Khan wanted to keep his troops in tact, but the British were pressing for immediate disbandment. It seems that Ambaji Inglia, who was a very

1. Busrwanlal p. 235

2. Ibid p. 236-237

3. Ibid p. 239

intimate friend of Rajrana Zalim Singh implored the latter to give an asylum to the unhappy family. Zalim Singh readily offered it and sent Muhammad Nur Khan, a Pindari jagidar of Kota to invite the family. He explained to Muhammad Shah Khan that, under the existing circumstances, Zalim Singh could not receive his brigade and become an open partisan of Mir Khan, but his family could be given a place of refuge in the fort of Shergarh.³ The offer was eagerly seized and the family went to Shergarh, while Muhammad Shah Khan continued where he was with his force.

Mir Khan's family at Shergarh

The family consisted of three begams and one mother, one brother-in-law and a number of children of Mir Khan. They had a retinue of about one hundred Pindaris and were all accommodated in a big house, not in the fort, as Busawanlal says. The house, later, on came to be known as Begum Sahib's Haweli. It still stands in tact at Shergarh, and is a massive building, containing numerous rooms and three halls, as also barracks for the Pindari soldiers and stables, for their horses. Now it is a deserted house, and tall jungle trees have grown in it. When Mir Khan visited Shergarh, he was accommodated in a separate house, known as Newab Sahib Ki Haweli. Till recently His Highness of Kota used to stay in it, when he went out for shooting in Shergarh jungles.

Mir Khan's family supported by Zalim Singh

On arrival at Shergarh, Zalim Singh made prompt arrangement for the maintenance and support of the Pindari family. He immediately borrowed an amount of Rs. 13,131/- from Shah Keshoram Shivnath and handed it over to the begams of Mir Khan. For the repayment of the debt at the rate of twelve percent Zalim Singh assigned to the creditor the revenue of five villages, namely Bhoja Khedi, Pachel Khurd, Kundi, Devari Khurd and Ratawad.

3. Ibid p. 238

The loan deed was executed in the name of Maharao Umed Singh of Kota in favour of Shah Keshoram Shivnath.¹ Separate amounts were given to Mir Khan's mother from time to time. In 1806 she was paid two thousand rupees three times, and in the preceeding year she was supplied food articles worth thirty five hundred rupees.² Zalim Singh spent over twenty thousand rupees a year on the family of Mir Khan, staying at Shergarh. One of the begams of Mir Khan used to send rakhi to Maharao Umed Singh of Kota who gave her complimentary presents.³ Nawab Mir Khan was grateful to the Maharao for the honour done to the begam, and when he visited Kota, he and his relatives all offered nazar to him.⁴ It was natural that Mir Khan would make very appreciative references to the Kota ruler and to Zalim Singh for all the generous hospitality extended to his family. Zalim Singh's news writer informed him from Mir Khan's camp at Devali near Burmandal in the monsoon of 1810 that Mir Khan remarked to Shah Jiwan Ram of Gainta as follows:—

“Such kindness as Raj Sahib has done me cannot possibly be done by any body else, while I have not been able to do him any service. I swear and say that if I am a true Pathan I shall never think of any difference with Raj Sahib.”⁵

Zalim Singh had sent him, as presents at this camp, two elephants and four horses with all necessary accountrements and an ambari which greatly pleased Mir Khan. He exhibited the presents and then remarked, “Well keep them apart, they are too nice to be paraded. I fear some one may demand them from me.” He further said, “Raj Sahib is my uncle and so good to me.”⁶

1. Kota state Archives of S. 1866 Basta No. 4 Bhandar-3

2. Kota state Archives of S. 1863 Basta No. 3 Bhandar-1.

3. Ibid

4. Kota state Archives of S. 1836-1922. Basta No. 8 Bhandar 5

5. Kota state Archives of 1867, News letters from the Hollar camp Devali near Burmandal.

6. Ibid.

The senior begam regularly sent a rakhi to Zalim Singh, who responded with reciprocal and suitable presents...The second begam paid a visit to Kota in the month of March of 1805, probably to see the Gangore festival.¹ Zalim Singh gave several dinners in her honour, and presented ornaments worth five thousand to her. Besides, he sanctioned an amount of rupees one thousand annually, over and above what she was getting from the proceeds of the five villages, assigned for the maintenance of the whole family.² She stayed at Kota till Id on which occasion again Zalim Singh sent her a present of five gold mohars and seventy-five rupees.³ When she left, Zalim Singh again sent her one hundred and sixty-six rupees.⁴ It seems that this lady made repeated demands to Zalim Singh. In 1806 a nose ring (nath) costing six hundred and seventy-five rupees and a diamond ring were sent to her by Zalim Singh from his camp at Dhanwad through Dev Karan of Indergarh.⁵ In 1810 fifteen tolas of gold was sent to her.⁶ A palki was also made for her at Kota and sent to Saergarh, a few months after her arrival there.⁷ She had become a rakhibandh sister of Madho Singh.⁸

Amir Khan helps Zalim Singh

In about 1805, inspite of all conciliatory and friendly measures of Zalim Singh, the Pindaris were causing wide-spread disturbances in the Kota state, and the Rajrana was finding it difficult to expel them. At this time Jaswant Rao Holkar and Mir khan were trying to extort an amount of one crore from Ambaji Ingliya by inflicting

1. Kota state Archives of S. 1861-62 Basta-73 Bh. No. 1

2. Ibid

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid-

5. Kota state Archives of s. 1863 Basta-5 Bhandar-3.

6. Kota state Archives of S. 1863-70. Basta No. 74, Bhandar-1.

7. Kota state Archives of S. 1863 Basta-5 Bhandar 3.

8. Kota state Archives of S. 1833. Basta Bhandar No.-3

all sorts of tortures on him. Inglia told Holkar that he would manage to considerable part of the amount if he were allowed to visit Kota. Holkar agreed and Inglia was sent to Kota in charge of Mir Khan and Bapu Sindhia. Ambaji forthwith paid fifty lacs on arrival at Kota, and while Mir Khan was staying with Zalim Singh, the latter requested him to effect ridance from the marauding Pindaris. Mir Khan arranged extensive operations against the freebooters and cleared the state of them. Of course, Zalim Singh paid him adequately for the valuable service, thus rendered.¹

Mir Khan deeply grateful to Zalim Singh

In 1810 Mir Khan learnt personally from Shah Jiwan Ram and Ajab Singh of Kota that the English had addressed a letter to Zalim Singh asking him to expel his family from Shergarh, and that Zalim Singh had replied saying, "Whatever may happen I shall never utter such words from my mouth." Hearing this, Mir Khan observed that "the states of Jaipur, Jodhpur and Udaipur have constructed houses for the reception of my family but I cannot put reliance on them. I rely only on Kaka Sahib (uncle, that is Zalim Singh) and I will keep my family under his protection. Kaka Sahib is like a God to me. I only know so much that Kaka Sahib is my only helper and no body else. Of course, I am a soldier and I can live in any house. I can stay amidst enemies, surrounded by dangers; but Raj Sahib will take care of my family." Hafiz, who accompanied Jiwanram and Ajab Singh was moved to hear these remarks and observed "May God bless you both." Mir Khan then concluded by saying, "If I am born of a true Pathan I shall for ever maintain friendly relations with Raj Sahib." Mir Khan sent two guns named Mahaban and Amir Baksh, as present to Madho Singh, whom he addressed as brother, and said to the Hafiz, "I am unburthening myself, certain suspicions have arisen in my

1. Busawanlal p. 271.

2. Kota state Archives of S 1807. News letter from Kamra Mandpya Pargana Hammirgarh (Udaipur)

mind regarding intentions of Kaka Sahib. I think he is considering what he should do, if attacked by the Farangis" The Hafiz replied, "What you suggest is impossible. Even if Hadauti is ruined, Raj Sahib will never deviate from his friendship with you."

The Movement of Begams

When possible, Mir Khan used to visit his wives at Shergarh, or bring them to his camp, and then take them back to their asylum. When encamped at Pushkar he went to Kota and brought his wives to his camp where they stayed for about three months. Then he took them back to Shergarh, and on his back, stayed with Zalim Singh for about six weeks.¹

When Mir Khan was encamped at Magrope in the Udaipur territory in the month of August 1910, one of his Begams came to meet him from Shergarh. She was escorted by several jagirdars and officers of Zalim Singh and a large number of troops. Mir Khan was pleased to see that Zalim Singh had arranged such a strong escort for her and gave suitable rewards to the officers and men of the escort. The list of the rewards, or (rukhsatana) as it was popularly called, will indicate that Mir Khan, though a chief of the plundering hordes, acted, on certain ceremonial occasions, as a prince, and his wives were treated by Zalim Singh and others as the begams of a nawab. In fact by 1800 Mir Khan came to be known as a Nawab and is referred to as such in all the news letters Zalim Singh received from his camp.

When the Begam reached the camp, Mir Khan was in great difficulty. His followers' salary was in arrears and he had no sufficient money to pay them. The troops surrounded his tent and held him in restraint, clamouring continuously for payment. Mir Khan slipped away stealthily but Ghafurkhan continued to discuss with them till midnight when they moved away only to reassemble

1. Daswanlal p. 303-G.

for dharna the following morning. Mir Khan remained in concealment in the zenana apartment while the troops continued to yell and howl outside for payment. But such situations were usual occurrences in the camps of the Marathas and the Pindaris and, therefore, they did not take them very seriously. When the escort party was still in the camp a son was born to the Nawab and there were usual festivities, notwithstanding the dharna; and the officers of the escort offered nazar to the Pindari chief.¹

Zalimsingh's cordial relations with Mir Khan

The Rajrana took care to maintain cordiality of relations with Mir Khan, and on every possible occasion he tried to please and placate him. Mir Khan also was equally anxious to continue to be friendly with Zalim Singh. The youngest wife of Mir Khan gave birth to a son in 1810 at Shergarh and she sent four servants to convey the happy news to Zalim Singh. In Rajputana the ceremony of conveying such happy news is called "hari bandhana" and consists of presentation of green leaves of barley to an elder by a barber or some domestic servants who are given rewards. Zalim Singh gave hundred rupees to the four servants who performed the ceremony according to the Rajputana ways.² Mir Khan also knew how to respect Zalim Singh's feelings. Once, to celebrate his success in a certain raid he fed a number of Brahmanas and gave them 'dakshinas' in a ceremonial manner, and so managed that the news was communicated to Zalim Singh.³ Zalim Singh also did not lag behind in pleasing Mir Khan. When the Nawab presented a 'deg' of rice at the dargah of Mitthaji in Gangron, Zalim Singh bore the expenses and sent Rs. 200/- for the purpose⁴ and on another occasion when Zalim Singh visited the Nawabs' camp, he distributed Rs. 200- to the fakirs who generally accompanied Mir

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1557. News letter from Kamra Mandpyn.

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1863-70, Basta 64, Bhandar-1.

3. Ibid.

4. Kota State Archives of s. 1563, Basta-73, Bhandar-1

Khan.¹ Mir Khan's brother-in-law (Wife's brother) Mannu Khan stayed with his sister at Shergarh and often visited Kota to meet Zalim Singh, who used to treat him with great regard and affection.² His marriage took place at Shergarh and he came to Kota personally to invite Zalim Singh. On this occasion the Rajrana gave him eleven gold mohars and one hundred and seventy rupees in cash. His younger son, Gordhan Das attended the wedding and participated in all the festivities. He spent one hundred rupees on fire works, presented hundred rupees as 'nyota' and distributed two hundred rupees as reward among the menial servants. He also gave a grand dinner on which an amount of Rs. 333/- was spent and a noble horse, with silver accoutrements, was presented. Rich dresses and ornaments were also presented to his mother, step mothers and the bride. Mannu Khan placed Rs. 100/- in the Khun (a plate) in which the Pehrawani (dresses etc.) were arranged and presented.³ After the marriage, Mannu Khan came to Kota to pay respects to Zalim Singh.⁴ A year after when Mannu Khan again came to Kota, Zalim Singh gave him a silver saz (accoutrements) worth Rs. 374/4/- for his horse.⁵ Besides, Mannu Khan used to receive thousands of rupees as pocket money from Zalim Singh from time to time.⁶ Similarly Mir Khan's son Shamsheer Bahadur, who must have been about 15 years old when his family sought refuge in the fort of Shergarh, was treated with love and regard by Zalim Singh. But this did not prevent Zalim Singh from prohibiting him from instructing the boy not to cross the river below Shergarh riding an e'phant because it was the prerogative of the ruler of Kota,⁷

1. Kota state Archives of S. 1863 Basta-5. Bhandar No. 1.

2. Kota state Archives of S. 1861-62, Basta-73 Bhandar-1.

3. Ibid.

4. Ibid

5. Kota state Archives of S. 1863 Basta-3. Bhandar-1.

6. Kota state Archives of S. 1862 Basta-5 Bhandar-1

7. Kota state Archives of S. 1874, Basta No. 11/2 Bhandar Talikon ka.

which Zalim Singh himself did not infringe. This instruction was conveyed in 1817 just a few months before Mir Khan accepted the British protection and became the Nawab of tonk. By this time the political situation had considerably crystalized, and Zalim Singh knew what was going to happen to him and to his friend Mir Khan. It was not, therefore, necessary for Zalim Singh to observe or feel any delicacy in prohibiting the boy from crossing the river on elephant's back. By the way, the warning also shows very clearly that Mir Khan's family was staying at Shergarh till a few months before the conclusion of the treaty between Mir Khan and the British, and also that Zalim Singh proved true to his words which his representatives conveyed to Mir Khan in his camp seven years ago, namely that inspite of the British pressure for expelling Mir Khan's family from Shergarh he would not utter a word from his mouth in this connection.

Mir Khan kept some Pindari horse at Shergarh to attend on his family and Zalim Singh bore the expenses of feeding these horses and arranged the supply of grams, gur and grass for them.¹ Ghafur Khan, a Pindari leader related to Mir Khan, paid occasional visits to look up Mir Khan's family and Zalim Singh used to arrange the necessary supply of gram, gur and grass for his horses also.² The relations between Zalim Singh and Mir Khan continued to be cordial all along. Friendly presents used to be mutually exchanged between them. Zalim Singh sent two seers of specially prepared tobacco for Mir Khan and the latter reciprocated by sending him twelve hundred and fifty betel leaves.³ The officers of the border parganas had standing instructions from Zalim singh that, while operating in the neighbourhood, if Mir Khan wanted some service from the Kota officials it should be readily rendered. Once Mir Khan wanted a number of bundles

1. Kota state Archives of S. 1865, Basta No 69 Bhandar 21/1.

2. Kota atate Archives of S. 1865. A letter addressed to Chain Ram.

3. Kota state Archives of S, 1861 Basta No, 3, Bhandar-1.

of Kota cloth to be transported to Narayanpura near Gagron, and the Hawalgir of Barsana (Shergarh) was requested to supply transport bullocks, and, when the instructions were not immediately complied with, Ghafur Khan, the agent of Mir Khan threatened to send a complaint to Rajrana Zalim Singh, on which the transport was immediately arranged.¹ With the help of Mir Khan, Zalim Singh succeeded in enlisting in his service several hundred Pindaris whom he gathered at Shergarh and Bilandi (Chhipabrod). The family of Mir Khan at Shergarh and that of Karim Khan at Bilandi were the nucleus round which the Pindaris assembled. In fact, these two places had become important Pindari colonies. It was Zalim Singh's policy to save his state from plunder by keeping the Pindaris usefully engaged in his service. The Pindaris got permanent livelihood, while Zalim Singh was saved from the constant menace. No body in contemporary India had pursued such a policy. Zalim Singh deserves credit for formulating and carrying it out with such remarkable success. In the last quarter of the eighteenth century there were some raids in southern and eastern parganas of the Kota state, and the people suffered so heavily that Zalim Singh adopted the policy of settling, helping and appeasing the Pindaris, with the result that Kota was the only area in Central India and Rajputana, which enjoyed immunity from the recurring plunder and destruction. A section of Zalim Singh's army consisted of a brigade manned entirely by the Pindaris who served him efficiently and loyally².

General policy of Zalim Singh towards the Pindaris

The main point in Zalim Singh's policy towards the Pindaris was to save his people from their raids. Naturally his policy of appeasement had several facets, namely jagirs, services, asylums, payments, presents, military aid, loans etc. He applied this policy and showed favours according to the importance and status of the Pindari leader concerned and, therefore, its implementation ranged

1. Kota state Archives of S. 1865 Chhinram's letter.

2. Kota State Archives of s. 1869, Basta 36 Bhanjar 21, 1

from fulsome flattery of Mir Khan to the petty 'parvarish' of Pindari troopers in his service. His general policy was to afford asylums to the families of Pindaris of all descriptions and thus keep their interests linked with the safety of the Kota state. This is why the ladies of the Pindaris, who enjoyed peace and comfort in his state, had cultivated high regard for Zalim Singh, and considered Hadauti as their adopted motherland. In this connection Zalim Singh felt highly gratified to receive a newsletter from the camp of Chitu and Rajan Pindari to the following effect.

"Mir Khan's mother visited this camp. She was received by Chitu and Rajan with great honour, and after mutual exchanges of social courtesies, she made a strong protest to Chitu saying "Hadauti is our mother. I am surprised that you selected this region for your plundering operations." Chitu felt immensely ashamed to hear this remonstrance and promised not to repeat his activity.¹ It seems that, on hearing of the destruction caused by Chitu and Rajan in the border paraganas of Kota, Zalim Singh so managed, of course, very tactfully, that the old lady must visit Chitu's camp and appeal to him to desist from his raids. Evidently no move could be more peaceful and more successful.

Zalim Singh celebrated the marriage of his daughter, Ajab Kanwar Bai, with unusual pomp and show which would be described later. On this occasion he extended invitations to a large number of Pindari chiefs, their lieutenants, and some ordinary troopers. Among the chiefs the most notable were Mir Khan, Karim Khan, Ghafur Khan and Chitu. Of minor chiefs there were twenty eight. Besides them, about six hundred ordinary troopers were also honoured. Those who attended were Mir Khan, Karim Khan, Chitu, Rajan, Shah Muhammad and about two dozen minor chiefs. The number of troopers was four hundred and sixty three and they brought about five hundred horses. It is really

1. Kota state Archives of S. 1869 Letter dated Mah badi Saptami from the combined camp of Chitu and Rajan.

remarkable that these people whose very name caused a shudder all over India were converted into gentlemen, possessing delightful social courtesy, not only towards a Mohammadan but towards a Rajput. Mir Khan and other chiefs brought suitable presents for the bride and the troopers were provided the games and races suitable for the occasion.¹

Suppression of the Pindaris

By 1816 the British Government was thinking of giving up the principles of non-interference which had so long regulated their political conduct in India. "Disorder and confusion were paramount over the whole length and breadth of India. The entire country was rent by internal strife. The strong were preying upon the weak. The supremacy of might was alone recognized. There was altogether a state of lawlessness and disorganization."² Charles Metcalf propounded a scheme for the settlement of central India and wrote a long note for submission to the Governor General. He classified the hostile powers into substantive states, military powers, not "substantive states, and the petty states. To the first class belonged Sindhia, Holkar and Bhonsle, and to the second class of powers the Pindaris-Mir Khan, Muhammad Shah Khan and other predatory leaders, and in the third class were included Jaipur, Jodhpur, Udaipur, Kota, Bundi etc. Metcalf was of opinion that the first thing the British Government had to do was the suppression of the power of the Pindaris, because they were menacing the tranquility of the British territory.³

Mir Khan made Nawab of Tonk

War preparations on a larger scale were started, but diplomacy was also employed simultaneously, and one great point was to

1. Kota state Archives of S. 1849 Basta No. 4 Jhal's gharu Kagad.

2. (i) Kaye, Vol. I. P. 312

(ii) V. B. P. 4015

3. Ibid. P. 315

detach Mir Khan from the confederacy of the Pindaris. To this object Metcalf directed his thoughts. He formulated the conditions to be offered to him. The conditions were:—

- (1) Perpetual guarantee of the territories Mir Khan held from Holkar.
- (2) Grant of ten lakhs to pay his troops before they were disbanded.
- (3) Disbandment of his predatory army, and disposal of his artillery at a fair value.
- (4) Acceptance of British protection and settlement on the territory assigned to him.

These were approved by the Governor General and Metcalf was assigned the task of conducting the negotiations with Mir Khan. On the ninth November of 1817 Mir Khan's agent, Lala Niranjanlal waited on Metcalf at Delhi, and on behalf of his master signed a treaty, 'accepting the terms offered by the British Government. Mir Khan renounced the cause of Holkar. Though he tried to avoid the ratification of the treaty for about one year, ultimately he was forced to sign it. General Donkin marched from Agra with a large army within ten or twelve kos of Madhorajpura which Mir Khan was besieging. The general blocked the road by which Mir Khan could join the army of Jaswant Rao Holkar via Kota. At the same time, general Ochterlony advanced from Delhi directly upon Jaipur and under threat of military coercion demanded the ratification of the treaty.¹ Mir Khan met the general at the village of Ruswan near Sanganer. The meeting took place in the right royal Indian style. Its interesting account given by Busawanlal deserves to be quoted in full, "The General on one side, and the Ameer on the other, mounted on elephants, met with much pomp and state, showing to each other reciprocal attention. When the Ameer was

1. Busawanlal P. 463

about an arrow's flight from the General, the latter took off his hat out of respect, and then from the top of the elephant, he embraced the Ameer, whereupon salutes were fired, and the two Chiefs dismounting, retired to tents, pitched in the plain for the purpose, the General coming on foot to that of the Ameer, so that the interview gave the latter much satisfaction. Next day, the Ameer went to the General's tents, and the General came out on foot to receive him, and walked with him hand in hand into the tent, and spared none of the attentions, and tokens of friendship and respect, which were due to his rank, reputation, and character. The Ameer stayed some time at this place, and was joined by Narunjun Lal. The General asked the Ameer for the ratification of the engagement, concluded at Dehlee. The Ameer said, he could not sign that instrument, until satisfied in respect to the further promises held out to him. He then, in presence of the General, sent for Narunjun Lal, and confronting him with the General, dispatched to Mr. Metcalfe a Khureeta, in which he proposed to settle these matters with Sir D. Ochterlony, thus holding the ratification in abeyance until an answer should arrive from Dehlee."

Metcalfe sent a very vague and diplomatic reply but Mir Khan now realized that peace was more advisable than hostility and ratified the treaty, and sent it to Sir David Ochterlony. Thus he became Nawab Amirud-Daula Mohammad Amir Khan of Tonk.

The Nawab's family comes to tonk

The treaty having been ratified, the Nawab settled at Tonk and requested Zalim Singh to send his family there from Shergarh. He gave the family a very friendly send-off, offering them valuable presents, and in his characteristic courteous manner, apologizing for all the inconvenience they might have suffered. The family arrived at Tonk, escorted by the Nawab's eldest son and a big

contingent of Zalim Singh's forces.¹ The Nawab sent a letter of grateful thanks, acknowledging all his friendly care and solicitude for the family. After leaving the family at Tonk, the young prince presented himself to his father at Neemahera in Jaipur. The meeting of the father and son was very delightful. Thus culminated the friendship of Jhala Zalim Singh and Mir Khan which commenced sometime in 1790. Six years later, Mir Khan was invited by Zalim Singh to grace the occasion of the marriage of his grandson, Madan Singh, which the Nawab attended, and presented a 'nyota' of five hundred and a pearl necklace and sarpech to the bridegroom. The friendship which commenced between Zalim Singh and Mir Khan about two hundred and thirty years ago continues uninterrupted between the heirs and descendants of these two chiefs. A few years ago, the Nawab of Tonk laid the foundation of a High School at Patan, which is now known as Amirud-Daula High School.

The Pindaris expelled from Kota.

After Kota had accepted the British protection in 1818, Zalim Singh was forced by Metcalfe to seize the jagirs of all the Pindaris. The Rajrana was very reluctant, because the Pindaris under him were behaving very well in return for the jagirs they held, but he was forced to accept the British policy and the fifty one villages yielding a total revenue of Rs. 63,700/- were resumed. The Pindaris in the state army also were gradually disbanded, after paying them their dues.²

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1874. Basta No. 11/2 Bhandar-3

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1874 Basta, No 11/2 Bhandar No. 3

CHAPTER VII

ZALIMSINGH AND THE EAST INDIA COMPANY.

Metcalf at Kotah :

Zalim Singh

Zalim Singh was an illiterate but like Akbar, Ranjit Singh and Shivaji, he possessed an uncommon intelligence and grasp, and his lack of education was more than compensated by his extraordinarily sound talent and foresight. He had pondered on every page of the history of the British power and had witnessed its developments from the battle of Plassey under Clive to Lake's exploits in north. As early as 1774 when the Britishers interfered in Poona politics, Peshwa Raghunath Rao had implored him for military aid. This must have supplied a practical proof, if one were necessary, to Zalim Singh how the British were on a look out for every opportunity for expanding their power.

The first officer of the East India Company whom Zalim Singh met was Metcalfe. He was going from Agra to Ujjain in the summer of 1802 and on the 2nd April he encamped at Kota. There he realized for the first time that he was an important man and had to act as a dignified official. He was then a lad of nineteen years, just taken in Company's service on account of his uncommon brilliance of intellect and precaution and sound judgement. He was informed that the Diwan of Kota, Rajrana Zalim Singh, who was the defacto ruler of the state would come to pay him a visit of ceremony. The rest may be told in Metcalfe's own words :—

“April 2nd : Kota : In the afternoon the dewan came to pay the complimentary visit. I had spread a white cloth over the satrang in the tent. I received him and his relations and friends

before the tent and after having embraced them led them in, I seated myself with them according to the Hindustani custom and after the ceremony of distributing pan and itra, ordered the presents to be brought, consisting of a gold watch, a brace of pistols, penknife scissors, and a Hindvi manuscript. To my great annoyance he accepted the whole, which I had never intended, and which is not a very general practice.

“April 3rd : The necessity of returning the visit detained me here this day. The streets were lined with inhabitants as if to view some strange spectacle. I could not help reflecting with what indifference I should be suffered to pass into a town in England, and yet how much happier I should be. I was received with the same ceremony which I had practised. The presents consisted of four shawls, three pieces of muslin, one of silk and one of orange coloured cloth.”¹

While Metcalfe was still staying at Kota, one of his followers died an accidental death and, therefore, he had to postpone his departure for some time to enable the friends of the deceased to perform their last duties to him. Metcalfe has not reduced to writing his impressions of Zalim Singh. The regent was then sixty four years old while Metcalfe was a boy of nineteen. Zalim Singh had met hundreds of persons, Indians and Europeans of ripe age and experience by now, and had not committed in his long career of over 40 years, as the dictator of Kota, a single blunder which might have made him sorry. Evidently he did not expect much in Metcalfe and paid him a visit because he was a servant of East India Company, which, Zalim Singh knew, was going to rule the whole of India. Metcalfe, young and inexperienced and just at the threshold of his career, could not have gauged properly the greatness of the man with whom he was face to face. He did it about fifteen years hence when he nego-

¹ Kaye Vol, I. p. 555

tiated with him the terms of the treaty of mutual friendship of 1818.

Zalim Singh and Colonel Monson

After taking Delhi and Agra General Lake encamped at Bayana early in 1804. He was preparing plans for a general campaign against Holkar, who had intercepted the correspondence passing between Lake and his officer regarding the details of the hostilities which were about to break. Holkar, on learning this, put to death Captains Vickers, Todd and Ryam. This precipitated the campaign. Lake detached Colonel Monson and Captain Lucan with a force of six battalions and four thousand horse. Lucan was a British officer who had served under the Marathas and who had come over to Lord Lake in response to the proclamation issued by the Governor General at the commencement of the hostilities. Colonel Monson had with him one thousand Jaipur horse and Bapu Scindhia's infantry which he sent back on entering the territory of Kota¹

General Lake had sent his representatives to Kota requesting Zalim Singh to render military aid to Colonel Monson. Zalim Singh readily responded and detailed two big jagirdars of Kota, Amar Singh of Palaitha and his namesake of Koela at the head of seven hundred horse. In doing so Zalim Singh had double object in view. Both the chiefs detailed were Hada Rajputs and closely related to the Maharao of Kota, and hence not very friendly to Zalim Singh, whose policy during half a century had been to extirpate the Hadas and thus crush all resistance to his rise to power. Zalim Singh's plan was that the two jagirdars should either perish in the fight or incur deep displeasure of Jaswant Rao Holkar. His plan succeeded very well.

Colonel Monson and Lucan advanced with Bapu Scindhia

1. Busawanlal and Princesps' notes. P. 212-314

and the Kota horse and passing through Mukandara reached Garote. He established posts at Rampura, Bhanpura, Hinglajgarh and other places belonging to the Holkar.¹ Hearing of these dispositions, Holkar advanced to meet Monson, who, hearing of the size of the Holkar's army, felt alarmed and consulted Babu Scindhia as to the best course to be pursued. Monson had no knowledge that Babu Scindhia was secretly in alliance with Jaswant Rao Holkar. He advised Monson that it would be inadvisable to resist Holkar who had such a superior force. He tendered his advice very dramatically. When consulted, he first hesitated to speak and then said, "I am a Maratha and my advice is likely to be misunderstood." On this the English officers begged that he would speak out; and then the wily man advised that the infantry should be sent back beyond the Mukandara pass and cavalry kept on the southern side ready to retire if need arose.²

Colonel Monson's Retreat.

Colonel Monson and Colonel Gardner (Not Colonel Polman as Busawanlal says) were panic-stricken and retired with their battalions, leaving Lucan with all the Kota horse on the southern side of the Mukandara Pass to defend their retreat. Babu Scindhia was also left with Lucan. On the first appearance of Holkar's army Babu Scindhia fled away, and conveyed the news of attack to Colonel Monson and then went over to Holkar's side³. The Kota horse fought with remarkable gallantry and a large majority of it fell fighting, while about two hundred were wounded. The jagirdar of Palaitha was killed on the spot and that of Koela, covered with wounds, left the field but expired on his way home.⁴ The wounded were attended to in a camp near

1. Busawanlal. P. 214

2. Busawanlal. P. 215

3. Busawanlal. P. 215 Princep's foot note No 2

4. (a) Thakur Lakshman Dan's Manuscript History of Kota

(b) Kota Rajsa Ka Itihas Vol. II. p.

the fort of Cagron and an amount of Rs. 1,205/12/- was sanctioned as a 'zakhamana' for their treatment.¹ Instructions were sent to the officer-in-charge of the Mukandara pass that he should permit Colonel Monson to Pass through it, and procure carpenters for repairing his bullock carts. When Monson retreated his fleeing forces were attacked by the Dadupanthi soldiers of this very officer. The Hawalgirs of Suket and Chechat were instructed to grant remission of revenue proportionate to the damage done to crops by the march of Monson's army.² The place where Amar Singh of Palai fell is marked by a cenotaph erected by his successors. It is not the Jujhar of the Koeja chief as Tod thought.³ Lucan's followers all deserted him. Only the Kota and Bundi horse stood by him but they were cut to pieces. Tod states that Lucan was killed fighting gallantly and the residents of Piplia point to a tree as the memorial of the deceased captain, but there is no such tree near Piplia and nobody now remembers who Lucan was.⁴ In fact Lucan was not killed on the battle field. He was severely wounded and made prisoner and later on delivered to Zalim Singh by the Holkar. He died of his wounds at Kota.⁵ Busawanlal, however, says that Jaswant Rao came upon Lucan, struck a blow at his neck and his head rolled upon the ground but Tod and Busawan Lal both are not correct. Princep's note is more reliable because he had easy access to all the military despatches and notes by contemporary British officers.

Zalim Singh requested by Monson for protection.

When Holkar was annihilating the Kota and Bundi horse not far from Garote on the southern side of the Mukandara pass

1. Kota State Archives of s. 1862

2. Kota State Archives of s. 1861. Basta (9) Blancar 3

3. Tod. Vol. II. P. 1597

Kota Rajya Ka Itihas. Vol. II

4. Tod. Vol. II. P. 1597

5. Princep's note on Busawanlal p. 216

and when Lucan had sustained severe wounds, Monson was encamped on the northern side of the pass, waiting to know the course of events on the other side. When Bapu Scindhia left the field and fled to Monsoon and conveyed to him the alarming news of disaster, the Colonel lost all his wits and writhed with agony of humiliation, but he could not think of any effort for retrieving the day.¹ The only course left open for him was to flee further and save his infantry, and equipage from Holkar. He, therefore, marched to Kota and asked Zalim Singh for protection within the walls of the city of Kota. But Zalim Singh was not the man who would blunder even in dream. When the British army passed through his territory he supplied military aid because he trusted in the invincibility of the British arms but now that very army was retreating after heavy and disastrous losses and with its morale completely broken. Zalim Singh, therefore, gave a "very proper refusal" saying, "You shall not bring anarchy and a disorganized army to mix with my peaceable citizens, but draw up your battallions under my walls. I will furnish provisions and will march the whole of my force between you and the enemy, and bear the brunt of his attacks." In order to palliate his own error Monson complained that Zalim Singh's refusal to admit his "panic stricken and beef-eating army within the walls was treachery and a connivance with the enemy." He forgot to mention that his retreat was made possible by the devoted sacrifice of the Kota horse and Lucan.²

Zalim Singh's Bakhshi promises ten lacs.

Among those taken prisoners by Jaswant Rao Holker was Zalim Singh's Bakhshi who executed a bond for paying ten lacs of rupees as fine for the military aid given by Zalim Singh to Monson. The bakhshi was released and sent to Kota to implement

1. Busawanlal p. 217

2. Tod. Vol. II, p. 1113

the document. When he appeared before Zalim Singh the latter ridiculed his act and sent him back to Holkar disowning the bond. The unfortunate Bakhshi, unable to bear the shame and humiliation and finding no way out of his difficulty, and took poison ended his life. Holkar threatened vengeance and waited for an opportunity to march into Zalim Singh's territory to force payment of the fine.¹

Zalim Singh Helps Monson

Zalim Singh held the Mukandara Pass for two days to delay the pursuit of Monson by Holkar who was waiting at the foot of the pass with his artillery and brigades. When he learnt that Holkar was ready to march, he withdrew his troops and allowed the Maratha army a free passage.² Even then Holkar did not forget the insult Zalim Singh had administered to him by lending his troops to Monson. In the meanwhile the Colonel's army was crossing the Chambal which was still nominally guarded. It so happened that Mir Khan's wakil Ghulam Khan was then at Kota and having a ride on the bank of the Chambal with his sawars. Monson and his followers thought that Holkar had arrived and became extremely panicky and in their consternation abandoned all the guns at the first sight of these troopers. Gulam Khan's sawars carried off all the guns.³ Princep, who is better informed, however, thinks that the guns were abandoned not out of panic but on account of the impossibility of taking them along the deep roads and ravines during rains. Before they were abandoned, they were spiked and rendered unservicable. ⁴ Holkar pursued Monsoon with hurricane speed and met him on the bank of the Banas near Bhag-

1. Tod. Vol. II. p. 1414 and Bakhshi Bhawani Shankar Chin Roz Nishin.

2. Busawanlal. p. 218

3. Busawanlal. p. 218

1. Princep's note on Busawanlal p. 218

wantgarh. Here Monson opened fire on Holkar who had no guns with him, but in spite of that, Monson was but to flight and the few guns which were still left with him were secured by Holkar. Broken and dispirited, Monson reached Kushalgarh with his followers who were in absolute despair. But Holkar soon arrived and Monson, leaving his last gun, fled on, and Holkar retired to Mathura; and Colonel Monson with the miserable remnants of his army made good his retreat to Agra. ¹

Holkar in Kota.

Holkar could not forget the part Zalim Singh had played in helping Monson against him. He made plans to march against Kota in 1806 and demanded the fine of ten lacs which Zalin Singh's Bakshi had agreed to pay on behalf of his master ² Holkar appeared before Kota at the head of a large army and threatened to reduce the city to rack and ruin if the fine was not immediately paid. Zalim Singh requested that they should discuss the terms of peace personally and try to avoid an armed conflict if possible. Zalim Singh was not so weak as to be pounced upon so easily and, therefore, Holkar agreed to have personal discussion. Zalim Singh proposed that the meeting should take place on the waters of the Chambal in order to avoid even the remotest possibility of any leakage of the subject of their conversation. The rest may be told in the words of Tod himself. "For this purpose Zalim Singh prepared two boats, each capable of containing about twenty armed men Zalim Singh having moored his own little bark in the middle of the stream under the cannon of the city, Holkar, accompanied by his cavalcade, embarked on his boat and rowed to meet him where carpets were spread; and there these extraordinary men, with only one eye between them, settled

1. Busawanlal. p. 220

2. Busawanlal p. 302

the conditions of peace and the endearing epithets of uncle and nephew were bandied, with abundant mirth on the peculiarity of their situations, while the fact was beyond doubt.—each boat was pluggd and men were at hand on the first appearance of treachery to have sent them all to the bottom of the river. But Holkar's necessities were urgent and a gift of three lacs of rupees averted such a catastrophe." A story is still told in Kota that Zalim Singh had entrusted the faujdarship of Kota to his son Madho Singh before he left for this meeting and had instructed him to fire on the boats the moment any foul play was witnessed, so that Zalim Singh and Jaswant Rao both might perish. Zalim Singh was now sixty seven years old and blind and palsied. He thought he had lived his days and had a son to succeed him to all his power and privileges. If he perished, the Jhala house would not lose much but the sudden destruction of Jaswant Rao would mean the complete ruin of Holkar's family and annihilation of his ten thousand foot and horse with which he had marched to Kota.

From 1806 to 1817.

During this period Zalim Singh did not come in official contact with the East India company. Evidently because the British adopted a policy of non-interference in respect of the states of Central India and Rajputana. During this period countless bands of Pindaris were over-running and ravaging the land and there was no peace in any state of Rajputana. Zalim Singh would have gladly availed himself of the opportunity of getting help from the East India Company but the policy of neutrality made it impossible and the lesson of Monson episode was too fresh and bitter in his mind to make a move in this direction. But he had increasing contact with the British, who were now moving about much more and in greater number than before, and,

as Kota was comparatively a safer tract, there were a lot of movements of these officers through this territory, while going from Agra to Ujjain or from Ujjain and Indore to Jaipur or from Dehli to Malwa. By 1817 the Englishmen knew every detail of the policy and attitude of Zalim Singh and he also, though blind and broken, had thorough knowledge of their political strategy and tactics. A British military officer who passed through Kota in January 1809 has recorded correct appreciation of the political situation in that state.¹ He says, "The legitimate raja of Kota is, with his family, kept in close confinement by a person named Zalim Singh, who had long usurped the entire management of public affairs, and is indeed recognized as a ruler by all the states of Hindustan. He is a man of very considerable talents, and, though not governing a very extensive territory, has yet contrived to render himself feared and respected by all his neighbours. He was lately nominated by Scindhia to the office of Suba or Governor of the province of Mewar, and paid a lac and a half of rupees for the appointment. The Maharaj (Scindhia), however, soon after changed his mind, continued the celebrated Ambaji in that situation, though he did not think it at all necessary to return his money to Zalim Singh." This officer thought, and rightly, that Zalim Singh had usurped the state of Kota.² He also mentions that Zalim Singh was too strong to let the Scindhia cross the ford of the Chambal at Dhipri and, therefore, the Maratha army had to march four miles along the bank of the Parbhati to get another ford at Balapa.³ He also learnt in the month of coming May that Zalim Singh has wrested from Rana of Udaipur in 1803 the pargana of Jahazgarh (Jahazpur) which had remained attached to his territory ever since.⁴

1. Broughton, p. 28

2. Broughton, p. 201

3. Ibid. p. 40

4. Ibid p. 104

When three batallions of Jean Baptiste's brigade returned from Bundi, they were surrounded by the minas of the Kota area who began snatching their guns and equipage and the men felt in imminent danger. They implored Zalim Singh for help who procured them a safe passage through the country.'

The Suppression of the Pindaris.

After peace with Nepal in December 1815 the Britishers turned their thought to what they called the pacification of Central India and Rajputana. Metcalfe thought that in 1815-16 the Britishers had reached a point at which any continued reliance on the policy of non-interference would be suicidal in the extreme. He, therefore, submitted a note urging the annihilation of Sindhia, Holkar and Bhonsls and the strategy he advocated was the destruction of the Pindaris first.² In fact the ultimate object was the destruction of the Maratha powers. The suppression of the Pindaris was only the preliminary part of the strategy.

In 1817 it was decided to invite cooperation of all the states of Central India and Rajputana for the suppression of the Pindaris. Mir Khan had already been detached by offer of advantageous terms and the British Government had now to deal only with Karim Khan, Chitu and their hordes. The other minor chiefs were not of consequence. When the plans had been perfected, a net work of diplomacy was spread over the states of Rajputana. A circular letter was addressed to all the chiefs inviting them agents to Delhi for concluding treaties of alliance with the British power.³ The condition were that—

1. Broughton p. 196

2. Kaya Vol. I p. 312-15 & Sardesai Vol. III p. 477

3. Ibid. Vol. I. 333

1. Any tribute payable to the Marathas should now be paid to the British.
- 2, The British would account for it to the Marathas.
3. The state concerned must not have any direct political relations with any other power. ¹

The first who accepted the invitation of Metcalfe was Zalim Singh, who sent his representative to Delhi for necessary discussion. Zalim Singh was the first chief whom Metcalfe had met at the beginning of his official career and with whom he had interchanged diplomatic presents. As Kota was a remarkable territory from several political and military points of view, and Zalim Singh's views, such as he had expressed, were known to be favourably inclined to the idea of an alliance with the British, Kota state was a subject of the first state paper which Metcalfe had drawn up for the use of Government. ² As early as 1803 when Metcalfe was only of twenty one years of age he drew up a memorandum for submission to Lord Wellesely recommending Kota as "The fittest place for the location of a subsidiary force, if it were to be planted in one central cantonment, or for a part of it, if it were to be broken up into several detachments. ³

Tod discusses with Zalim Singh.

In the coming campaign against the Pindaris, Hadauti or the territory of Zalim Singh was going to be a centre of action. It was, therefore, considered necessary that an agent of the British Government should stay with Zalim Singh. Colonel Tod the assistant resident at Sindhia's court was deputed by the Governor

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1. Princep's History of the Political and military Transaction in India during the Administration of Marquis of Hastings. Vol. II
 2. Kaye Vol. I, p. 332-33.
 3. Ibid. p. 82.

General to the Rajrana. He reached Zalim Singh's camp at Raontha, about twenty five miles to the south of Kota on the 23rd November, 1817. ¹ Colonel Tod has given a very interesting account of his interview with Zalim Singh in this connection. When Zalim Singh was told that the British Government had no intention of conquest and that the campaign against the Pindaris was not one of aggrandisement, a significant smile played over his wrinkled countenance, and when Tod protested, he remarked, "I cannot doubt you believe what you say, but remember what old Zalim tells you, the day is not distant when only one emblem of power (Ek Sikka) will be recognized through out India." ²

Zalim Singh's revised policy towards the Pindaris.

As described in the foregoing chapter. Zalim Singh had pursued a policy of friendship towards the Pindaris. He had settled large numbers of them at Belandi, Shergarh and Pindaron Ki Chhaoni. More than forty minor Pindari chiefs were enjoying petty jagirs under him. About two thousand Pindaris were serving in his army. He had friendly relations with Mir Khan, Karim Khan, Chitu etc. who never harrassed or raided his territory and received many kindnesses from him. No other state in India had adopted such friendly or conciliatory attitude towrds them. The Marathas used them as auxiliaries. They assigned them jagirs for maintenance, and Sindhia treated them also with honour but neither he nor Hoikar had any idea of settling them down to peaceful occupations. It was Zalim Singh alone who looked far into the future. The British Government in their hurry to strike at the Maratha power, dealt a sudden destructive blow to the Pindaris and gave them no chance to improve themselves and settle down as peaceful citizens. Only Mir Khan was treated with certain consideration. Other leaders and the common

1. Tod, Vol. II. p. 1120

2. Ibid.

Pindaris were hunted down and destroyed. Zalim Singh also was called upon to pursue the British policy in this respect and forced to withdraw his support from his old friends and those who had enjoyed his support and protection for about thirty years and who had nothing but good conduct to their credit. Of course, this is not applicable to the thousands of other Pindaris who ravaged and pillaged the different parts of India.

Zalim Singh's camp a pivot of operations.

Tod had instructions to secure from the Regent resources of Kota for the British armies operating round the state. Once Zalim Singh had made up his mind to throw in his lot with the British power, his cooperation was so sincere and complete that every pass was made a post to keep out the Pindaris, and Zalim Singh's fifteen hundred men with four guns cooperated with General Malcolm who marched up from the south. The Regent's camp was the centre of all activities and intelligence, and his assistance was vigorous and continuous. When the British troops, operating inside his territory, harrassed and insulted his people, he chafed and chagrined internally and sometimes expressed his agony in the language of parables, but he did not swerve from the path he had once chosen for himself.

Karim Khan pursued and captured.

With Karim Khan, Zalim Singh had been very intimate. In spite of the fact that Kota was a feudatory to Scindhia who was hostile to Karim, Zalim Singh had ransomed him for five lakhs of rupees and afforded a good and comfortable asylum to his old mother. At the same time Zalim avoided every chance of offence to Scindhia. After his release when Scindhia again pursued Karim and he wanted to enter the Kota territory, Zalim Singh advised him to keep away.¹ and saved himself from a diffi-

1. Malcolm. Vol. I. p. 371

cult situation. But in all circumstances, Zalim Singh's sincerity was undoubted. It must have been, therefore, a really great moral strain on Zalim Singh when he was called upon to cooperate in rounding Karim Khan. But this does not mean that Zalim Singh was an admirer of the predatory activities of the Pindaris. He had only personal attachment to Karim, Mirkhan and a few others who repaid his friendship with esteem and respect. But it was in the very heart of his territory that three British divisions closed in upon the Pindari horde under Karim Khan, and Zalim Singh's horse and infantry were assisting the British army. So restless and relentless was the pressure on Karim Khan that he had to leave his family behind in Harauti, and fled away. The remaining story of his life has been told in the previous chapter. Zalim Singh was not permitted to give any asylum to the helpless and forlorn family. General Dunkin, who marched from Jaipur into the Kota territory took them in his custody,¹ and it is not known what happened to them afterwards. How Mirkhan became the Nawab of Tonk and how the Pindari jagirdars of Kota were uprooted and expelled, and also how the Pindari troops were disbanded has already been described.

Zalim Singh's services appreciated.

The sincere and whole hearted cooperation of Zalim Singh was very much appreciated by the Government. Lord Hastings and Mr. Adam were convinced that Zalim Singh had rendered great services to the British Government. In respect of future political relations with Zalim Singh, Colonel Tod was to act as the agent of the British Government, because during the days of the Pindari wars, when he stayed constantly with the veteran regent, he had obtained great insight into the working of his mind. In view of the unique services rendered by Zalim Singh the British Government wanted to reward him by the grant of

1. I bid 373.

the four parganas, namely the parganas of Dag, Pachpahar, Ahore and Gangrad, collectively known as Chaumahala which Zalim Singh held from Holkar on Ijara system. When the sanad of the gift was conveyed to Zalim Singh he declined to accept it as it was, and remarked that his name should be replaced by that of his master, the Maharao of Kota. The British officers at that time thought that it was an act of high disinterested magnanimity. In fact it was very difficult to gauge the intentions of the old politician who, as Tod had remarked, generally talked in parables and never betrayed the real feelings of his mind even to his closest and most intimate friends. Colonel Tod was associated with him continually for about a period of eight years, but, even upto the moment of his departure from India, he failed to understand the real motives of the mind of this mighty diplomat. To respect his desire the sanad was drawn up in favour of Maharao Umed Singh of Kota for the good offices rendered by him to the British Government, and the four parganas mentioned above were transferred to his sovereignty and he was permitted to attach the ryots to him by kindness and take them under his Government. ¹

Zalim Singh concludes treaty with the East India Company.

When Metcalf circularized a letter to the chiefs of Rajputana inviting them to send their agents to Delhi to accept the treaty of alliance which the British Government was proposing, Zalim Singh did not hesitate for a minute but grasped the opportunity and sent Shah Jiwan Ram to meet Metcalf. On behalf of Zalim Singh he accepted the draft provisionally and brought its Persian version to Rajrana Zalim Singh. There was

1. (a) Tod, Vol. II, p. 1423

(b) Aitchison, Vol III, p. 272-73

(c) Munshi Jwala Sahaya, Vol. III p. 231

hardly any choice left to the Rajput chiefs to amend the draft which was more or less uniform for all of them.

Zalim Singh knew that he was now losing permanently the freedom which for the last half a century he had enjoyed in spite of numerous political vicissitudes, accompanied by losses and gains and trials and triumphs. But his quick eye also discerned the advantage which the proposed political alliance promised to offer, namely absolute perpetual security from dangers and risks, incursions and raids, and fines and impositions. He also knew that his long-drawn part in the panorama of political drama had practically finished, because he was now eighty years old, blind and paralytic, and that a treaty would secure the position he had enjoyed, to his sons and successors also. He, therefore, sent back Shah Jiwan Ram, Kamdar of Gainta and his master Maharaja Shivdan Singh, Thakur of Gainta and Lala Hul Chand with full powers to accept and sign the treaty.¹ Accordingly a treaty of perpetual friendship, alliance and unity of interests between the British Government on one hand and Maharao Umed Singh Bahadur and his heirs and successors on the other was concluded at Delhi. It was signed and sealed on the 26th December, 1817 by Charles Metcalfe by virtue of full powers granted to him by Governor-General Lord Hastings. Similar powers had been granted also by the Maharao Umed Singh and his administration Rajrana Zalim Singh to Maharaja Shivdan Singh Shah Jiwan Ram and Lala Hul Chand who put their signature to the treaty. It was agreed that the ratification of the treaty would be exchanged within a month from the date of signatures.² This was done on the sixth January, 1818.

The treaty consisted of eleven articles which, when analysed meant that in return for the protective alliance extended to Kota

1. Thakur Lakshmandan's Manuscript History of Kota in Hindi.

2. Aitchisson. Vol. III. P. 369-69

the Maharao would act in subordinate cooperation with the British Government, and would not have any connection with the chiefs of other states without the sanction of the British Government, and the tribute paid to the Maratha chiefs would be payable to the British Government, and when required by the British Government, the Kota state would furnish troops according to its means. ¹ According to this treaty the tribute of Kota was fixed at Rs. 2,57,600/- in Delhi rupees, Zalim Singh made arrangement for immediate payment by hundis issued to Shah Keshoram Sheonath, Shah Jagannath Sitaram, and Dwarka Nath. ²

Maratha Jagirdars expelled from Kota

The prelude to the suppression of Pindaris was that Zalim Singh was called upon to resume all the Pindari Jagirs, disband the Pindari levies and expel Pindari families. This demand was complied with literally though very reluctantly. Now the preliminary to the treaty of perpetual friendship and alliance was to extirpate the Marathas from Kota. Pressure was brought upon Zalim Singh to resume all the Jagirs held by the Deccanee Pandits and to expel all of them from his state, A circular order, therefore, was issued to the Hawalgirs and Patwaris of the various parganas to resume all such jagirs forthwith and to expel all the Maratha families with immediate effect. Thus ended Zalim Singh's political connection with the Marathas, which commenced about sixty years ago and which was responsible for the settlement of numerous influential Marathas in the Kota state. However, about half a dozen Maratha Jagirdars survived this political cataclysm and one of them was the descendant of Lalaji Ballal. These families became permanent residents of the state and have survived to the present day. Their jagirs were resumed by the Government

1. I bid.

2. Kota state Archives of S. 1874 B

of Rajasthan only a few years ago when the states of Rajputana were integrated.¹

The secret clause in favour of Zalim Singh and his descendants.

Rajrana Zalim Singh was almost at the end of his days when the treaty was signed. There was a bitter opposition to his dictatorial powers by the Hada jagirdars of Kota and the young sons of the Maharao. Umed Singh himself, being now old, had no ambition of asserting himself, but he might have secretly desired that his son Kishore Singh should be a real ruler. This desire might have been awakened in him by the fact that the ceaseless pressure of the Marathas and the menace of the Pindaris which made Zalim Singh indispensable had been now extinguished. However, Umed Singh probably made no fuss and trusted future as to the shape the events would take in respect of his son Kishore Singh and Zalim Singh's son Madho Singh, but Zalim Singh was not the man who would resign himself to fate or future. He wanted to determine the future himself. He considered himself the saviour and preserver of the Kota state during the long period of over half a century of tumults and turmoils, and stresses and storms, and now when the time had come to reap the fruit of his long long labours, he would not let it slip from his hand.

Tod had philosophised over Zalim Singh's attitude which manifested itself in his reluctance to accept the sanad of chauhahla in his name. He says that it might be his personal pride or his loyalty to his chief or his expectation of a bigger reward for the services he had rendered, which determined Zalim Singh's unwillingness to accept this sanad, and this is why he got it changed in the name of his master the Maharao Umed Singh. The

1. Kota State Archives of S. 1874 B. 112 No. 1112

finalization of the sanad was kept in abeyance for full one year. In the meanwhile, the main treaty was being signed and Zalim Singh was concentrating on the supplementary clause. He expected the British Government to consider his claim with special care and sympathy. No other man in Rajputana and Central India, and in fact neither in the south nor in the east, had been so consistently friendly, loyal and responsive as Zalim Singh, and none else had given such a ready and sincere cooperation as he. From 1799 till the moment of his death he never swerved from his steadfastness of friendship with the British and the services he rendered in the Pindari campaign and the readiness with which he accepted the proposal of an alliance had no parallel in the history of the British conquest of India. Zalim Singh, therefore, was not unreasonable if he expected a special consideration from the British Government for all what he had done.

The British Government understood him well and rewarded him rather over generously. A supplementary clause was added secretly to the treaty contracted with the Maharao of Kota, according to which the principality of Kota was to descend in regular succession in perpetuity after Maharao Umed Singh to his oldest son and his heirs, and the entire administration of the affairs of the principality was vested in Rajrana Zalim Singh and after him in his eldest son and his heirs.¹ This was a secret clause unknown to Kishore Singh and his admirers, friends and supporters. Probably it was so managed by Zalim Singh that only he and Maharao Umed Singh knew it. Maharao Umed Singh might have thought that, so far as he himself was concerned, he had no fear of any contest with Zalim Singh, and as his end seemed to be quite near, Kishore Singh would know it automatically, and so it happened. But it was wrong to suppose that even Umed Singh did not know anything about the supplementary

1. (a) Aitchison. Vol. III. p. 372

(b) Tod Vol. II. p. 1421-22

clause and that it was an engagement only between the British Government and Raj-ana Zalim Singh.

In fact the supplementary clause was signed by as many as six persons namely-Metcalf, Maharao Umed Singh, Rajrana Zalim Singh, Maharaja Shivdan Singh, Hul Chand and Shah Jiwan Ram on the twentieth day of February, 1818 and was ratified on the 7th March, 1818. But there is no doubt that there was something fishy about this engagement. The date of the engagement is the same as of the main treaty. The clause does not mention that the Maharao empowered any body to accept and sign it. The signatures of the six persons named above including the Maharao and Metcalfe were put at Delhi but there is no evidence to show that Maharao Umed Singh was at Delhi on the twentieth February of 1818. Besides, the signature of Shivdan Singh, Hul Chand and Jiwan Ram are significant. Ordinarily these three persons were not expected to be a party to the finalization or such an important clause, but it seems that their signatures were arranged by Zalim Singh so that they might serve as witness. The fact that the supplemental article was ratified by the Governor General on the seventh March 1818 also signifies that some sort of hitch was felt. Of course, it was quite evident that the secret clause was a subsequent idea conceived and actualised immediately after the main treaty. It is not true that Maharao Umed Singh knew nothing about it, because his signature is there; but that his signature was obtained through pressure coercion and duress, and also that he put his signature not at Delhi but at Kota is clear from the fact stated above.

To say the least the secret clause was not an open, frank and straight forward political engagement and whatever be the reasons in favour of Zalim Singh, the clause was clearly a fraud perpetrated jointly by the Britishers and Zalim Singh on the heirs and descendants of the Maharao of Kota. Zalim Singh had no doubt rendered unique services to the East India Company but

he did it with the resources of the Kota state and as a servant of the Maharao, which expression was ever on his tongue. Therefore, the gratitude of the British Government was due first to the Maharao and secondly to the Rajrana, but Metcalf and Hastings extended it exclusively not only to the latter but to his heirs and descendents in perpetuity, which was not obviously fair. For this half a century's service to Maharao Umed Singh and about twenty years devotion to the East India Company, Zalim Singh had got every thing—large wealth, magnificent palaces, power, prestige and status, in fact every thing that a real prince could enjoy. No doubt, he deserved it but it was highly unfair of him to suppose that his son and his heirs also deserved it and, therefore, should continue to enjoy it perpetually. This engagement is a stain on Zalim Singh's character. It made him extremely unpopular in the states of Rajputana, and in the Kota state there were attempts on his life and frequent risings which he suppressed with the help of the British arms. Writing about twenty five years after his death, Suraj Mal, the poet historian of Bundi said, "Jhala managed to acquire the friendship of the British by his political viles and strategy, by offering them bribes and presents and by betraying his master. The Britishers began to think that their interests were identical with his".¹

Maharao Umed Singh's death and Zalim Singh's letters.

Maharao Umed Singh expired suddenly on the 21st November 1819. and immediately Rajrana Zalim Singh addressed a letter to Colonel Tod, who was on his way from Marwar to Mewar, intimating to him the news of the calamity. The letter was in Hindi and is quoted by Thakur Lakshman Pan in his history, The English translation as done by Colonel Tod is produced below :—

“Until Sunday, the eve of the first saffar, the health of

1. Vansha Bhaskar p. 4017

Maharao Umed Singh was perfectly good. About an hour after sunset, he went to worship Shri Brajnathji. Having made six prostrations, and while performing the seventh, he fainted and remained totally insensible. In this state he was removed to his bed chamber, where every medical aid was given, but unavailingly. At two in the morning he departed for heaven.

“Such affliction is not reserved even for a foe. but what refuge is there against the decree? You are our friend, and the honour and welfare of those whom the Maharao has left behind are now in your hands. Maharao Kishore Singh, eldest son of the deceased Maharao has been placed upon the throne. This is written for the information of friendship.”

The translation is poor and unidiomatic but it conveys the sense of the original quite substantially and also reveals to some extent the mind of the old man. Umed Singh had ascended the throne as the ward of Zalim Singh. He acquired manhood and attained old age under his care and expired under his tutelage. During the last fifty years there was never an occasion of any conflict, nay even misunderstanding, Umed Singh swallowed even the bitterest and the biggest pill of putting his signature to the supplementary clause of the treaty of 1817. It is just possible that he might have experienced a suppressed agony when he realized that the right of governing the Kota state had been perpetually taken away from him and his heirs. This might have hastened his death.

Zalim Singh's right to rule questioned.

Zalim Singh seated Umed Singh's eldest son on the throne, but not in the way his father Umed Singh was crowned. At the time of accession Umed Singh was only ten years old, while Kishore Singh had attained mature manhood. He was forty years old. He was already fretting and frowning under the domineering behaviour of Zalim Singh, and his feelings of discontent

were further fomented by his youngest brother Prithvi Singh¹ who possessed an indomitable spirit which was waiting for an opportunity to manifest itself. He encouraged his brother to be a real ruler by asserting himself against Zalim Singh even to the point of an armed conflict, if need be. The middle brother Vishnu Singh was thirty seven years old and out of selfish motives leaned towards Zalim Singh for support. Zalim Singh had two sons, Madho Singh and Gordhan Das. Madho Singh was forty six years of age. He possessed an attractive and impressive personality but was rather inclined to be indolent and pleasure-seeking. Before retiring to his Chhaoni, Zalim Singh had entrusted the administration of state to him in about 1806, but kept the general direction of policy in his own hands. This turned Madho Singh's head and made him arrogant. He was very fond of pomp and show and maintained a magnificent darbar. This did not please Zalim Singh, who often used to remark, "When I am no more, the power and pelf I have built up will perish in the hands of Madho Singh." Madho Singh's arrogance, extravagance and pompous pride had excited the legitimate jealousy of the three royal princes. On the other hand Gordhan Das, the younger and illegitimate son of Zalim Singh, who was now twenty seven years of age was gifted with courage, wisdom and vigilance. In several respects he resembled Prithvi Singh and naturally a great intimacy had developed between them. He was more inclined towards Kishore Singh, evidently for the same reason which made Vishnu Singh lean on Zalim Singh. Madho Singh did not like Gordhan Das' intimacy with the princes and once he got him arrested and kept him in custody for a few days which had estranged the two brothers for ever.² Gordhan Das was born of a Muslim concubine of Zalim Singh but was married

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1. (a) Thakur Lakshman Dan's manuscript history of Kota state in Hindi/
(b) Tod Vol. II. p. 1414
 2. Tod Vol. II p. 1425-26

to a poor Rajput girl, and socially was treated for all practical purposes as a full-blooded Rajput. He had held the post of the Pradhan for several years and in that capacity had controlled the grain markets of several Rajput states of Rajputana and was, therefore, quite well known in the political and military circles of Rajputana. He was, therefore, in possession of large wealth and property. Under these circumstances Prithvi Singh and Gordhan Das came closer and closer to each other and became the chief advisers of the new Maharao, Kishore Singh, and frequent discussions began to be held in closed rooms of the palace as to how to wrest power from the hands of the old paralytic and his arrogant son. The basis of these discussions and discontents was the secret clause of the treaty. It led the young coterie rightly to believe, and they found no difficulty in convincing the new Maharao, that Zalim Singh was highly disloyal to the throne, and that all his professions of loyalty and devotion to the late Maharao Umed Singh were nothing but rank hypocrisy. They argued that the only engagement which Maharao Kishore Singh was under moral obligation to respect was the treaty of eleven articles, openly made by the two high contracting parties, and that the secret supplementary clause must be annulled and abrogated.

The feelings and attitude of Maharao Kishore Singh and his two turbulent advisers were no longer a secret. People in the city and in the districts freely talked about them and felt great sympathy for and devotion to the cause of the Maharao, as is evidenced from the correspondence of the period. It was indeed a very difficult position for the veteran Regent whose reputation had been continuously mounting up since the battle of Bhatwara. His political hypocrisy had succeeded in keeping the realities of his intentions concealed for over half a century when the haze and maze of raids and deprdations of political

storms and cyclones had blurred the vision of people, but now the veil was torn and the situation had crystallized. The successful politician of eighty one years' of age, possessing neither sight nor strength, was now with his inward eye witnessing, as it were, the first strong shock to the structure of his ambitions.

Conflict between Zalim Singh and Kishore Singh develops.

Prithvi Singh and Gordhan Das, though young and impetuous, were wise and clear-headed. They argued that the tenth article of the treaty laid down that the Maharao and his heirs and successors shall remain absolute rulers of their country. It could not, therefore, thus be reconciled to the secret clause of the treaty which recognized that the power of administration shall descend from Zalim Singh to Madho Singh and his heirs and successors. They further argued that the two clauses were contradictory and that the late Maharao had absolutely no knowledge of the secret clause. That the two clauses were irreconcilable was self evident. As to Maharao Umed Singh's ignorance of the secret clause, Zalim Singh dangled Maharao Umed Singh's signature before Kishore Singh. It has been observed already that Umed Singh's signature on the secret clause along with those of Shivdan Singh and Jiwan Ram is not understandable and the whole matter seems to be full of intrigue and machination. Therefore, when Kishore Singh and his advisers proclaimed that the clause was Zalim Singh's fraud the argument appealed very readily to the intelligence of the people and there was abundant sympathy for the claim, aspirations and legitimate demands of the Maharao and his party. The situation rapidly developed into an estrangement between the Maharao and the Regent. Mutual intercourse ceased, and the whole atmosphere became surcharged with rancour and bitterness amounting to open hostility. The account by Tod of the events that followed is politically garbled. Fortunately some pages of the personal diary of Kishore Singh are preserved in the Kota archives containing an account of the

events that took place from day to day during the fourteen months that followed the death of his father, Maharao Umed Singh.

Kishore Singh's demands.

The new Maharao represented to the political agent that five hundred horse and five hundred foot be detailed as his personal body guards and put wholly under him and that Gordhan Das be put in charge of 'Bari Kachahari' under Madho Singh. Tod did not accept the second part of the proposal but arranged the body guards. For Gordhandas he assigned a jagir of Relawan, of the value of fifty thousand, and asked him to stay at the place of his jagir, and also allotted the house of late Ambaji Ingolia for his residence at Kota when ever necessary. Kishore Singh accepted this and further proposed that Zalim Singh might continue to conduct the administration of the state without any interference from him but that the Bari Kachahari, the privy purse, the palace establishment and the body guards should be exclusively under himself. This demand became necessary because Zalim Singh was exercising control even inside the palace area and by posting his own men at important points was watching every phase of the movements and activities immediately round the Maharao. Tod conceded some of the demands of the Maharao and removed Zalim Singh's men from several points in the palace except those posted at the gate known as Kanwar Padi Ki Dyodhi, though which lay the passage to Zalim Singh's house, and also desired that Gordhan Das must stay at Relawan and should not come to Kota except when invited and that the Maharao's brothers Vishnu Singh and Prithvi Singh should not interfere at all in the state administration. He further proposed that Madho Singh would stay at Nanta and not in the city. In these negotiations the mediator was one Bal Mukund in whom the Maharao and Tod had equal confidence. The

Maharao accepted the terms offered by Tod¹ and every thing seemed to be all right, but a simple incident suddenly revived the pent up feelings of mutual bitterness and precipitated a crisis. Zalim Singh entered the palace escorted by a large retinue consisting of men hostile to the Maharao. To this Kishore Singh objected but Zalim Singh took shelter behind the order of Tod, who, he said, had advised him to have the escort. Kishore Singh lost his balance of mind and at once decided either to end or mend the matter. Accompanied by his body guards and followed by his several adherents of high position, he left the palace and went to Rangbadi five miles to the south of Kota. His plans were to go to Nathdwara and enlist help of his brother princes and fight it out finally with Zalim Singh.²

Zalim Singh's attitude.

Colonel Tod, the political agent of Rajasthan, who happened to be at Kota at that time, viewed the whole situation with seriousness. He apprehended that, as there was considerable sympathy and admiration for the conduct of Kishore Singh among the people of Kota, the whole trouble might spread in the districts and there might be a popular rising in favour of the ruler. Tod appreciated the situation quite correctly because the whole Hadauti at that time was seething with discontent and disaffection against Zalim Singh, whose real motives since the treaty of 1817 had been fully exposed. His parables and riddles had been now solved and his equivocations had become intelligible. Tod asked him as to what he would suggest in order to prevent the contagion from spreading in Hadauti but old Zalim Singh replied in his "characteristic phraseology," I will cling to my sovereign's skirts and render him 'chakri', I would rather retire

1. Kota state Archives of S. 1570 1581. Box 14. B. 12007.1

2. Ibid.

to Nathdwara than blacken my face with any treason towards my master." Tod felt much embarrassed by this reply but he quickly decided his line of action and rode to the ruler's camp in all haste and persuaded Kishore Singh to return to his palace. In June 1818 Gordhandas was deported to Delhi and it seemed that the ruler and the regent had been reconciled. Before leaving Kota Colonel Tod arranged a meeting on the fourth September between the Regent, the Maharao and Madho Singh. The conference was cordial. There were expressions of mutual forgiving and forgetting the past and solemn assurances of amity and harmony in the future. ²

Preparation of war against Zalim Singh.

Gordhan Das, while residing at Delhi in exile, smarted under the humiliation inflicted on him and was ever active, thinking how he could restore real ruling power to Kishore Singh. It did not take him long to find an excuse for moving out from Delhi and trying to combine with Kishore Singh. He had promised to marry the illegitimate daughter of the prince of Jhabua in Central India and obtained permission to proceed to that place for the celebration of the nuptials. His departure from Delhi was a signal for wide spread trouble in Kota, which even affected the loyalty of the army to the regent. A military officer Saif Ali with his fifteen hundred men deserted Zalim Singh and went over to Maharao Kishore Singh. This was followed by an open conflict between the ruler and the regent.¹ The regent immediately interposed a big force between the rebel battalion of Saif Ali and the castle which brought the matter to issue. The Maharao managed to bring Saif Ali and his men inside the palace, on which Zalim Singh immediately ordered gunfire by two twenty four pounders against the palace. It created a terrible situation in the city and news spread like

1. Tod. Vol II. p. 133-34.

wild fire in the neighbouring areas by the becoming of guns. Further ugly developments were saved by the Maharao's fight across the Chambal to Bundi with about 600 faithful followers and a few of his sardars.¹

Zalim Singh's conduct during absence of Kishore Singh

As soon as Zalim Singh knew that Maharao Kishore Singh had left his palace he entered the castle, assembled the leading citizens of kota and officers of the state and expressed great grief at the departure of his kind master and said, "The rogues have mislead my great master, and have blackened my face. From whom shall I now receive inspiration and instructions?" He stood a perfect picture of sorrow and despair for a moment and then with a dramatic suddenness ordered the sandals of Maharao Kishore Singh to be brought and placing them on the throne, remarked to all those who were present, "In the absence of Shriji Hazur (His Highness), I shall get guidance and instructions for the conduct of the affairs of the state from these sandals. Am I not really the chakar (servant) of his shoes?" As people judge in most cases superficially, the regent's remarks made even with affected depth and devotion must have had very good effect on the majority of his audience.¹

Zalim Singh's further move.

Zalim Singh was afraid that, while staying at Bundi, Maharao kishore Singh might collect forces and enlist direct or indirect aid of other brother princes and attack him. It was clear that much sympathy was felt for Kishore Singh, and Zalim Singh was universally unpopular. The regent, therefore,

1. Thakur Lakshman Dan's manuscript History of Kota state in Hindi, and V. B. p. 4021.

2. (a) Ibid.

(b) Tod. Vol. II p. 1435-36.

requested Tod to take necessary precautions against such possibilities by advising the ruler of Bundi to see to it that the Maharao while, enjoying the hospitality of Bundi, might not plot against the British Government¹

Kishore Singh leaves Bundi and goes to Delhi.

Vishnu Singh the ruler of Bundi received Kishore Singh with cordial affection and made his stay very comfortable, and advised him to wait for a proper opportunity for action. The secret of Tod's communication to Raoraja Vishnu Singh of Bundi that he would be responsible if the Kota prince congregated troops for the purpose of hostility to the regent had leaked out to him and, therefore, he left Bundi to represent his case to the British Government at Delhi.² On his way he received messages of condolence and sympathy from several princes which indicated in what great respect he was held and, indirectly, how unpopular Zalim Singh was. He passed some time at Brindaban and Mathura, and then arrived at Delhi where he stayed for about two weeks and, though in financial difficulty, spent considerable amount in connection with his interview with the Government's representative. So great was his difficulty that he had to pawn his family jewels in order to meet the expenses of his interview and stay at Delhi.³ Kishore Singh got no sympathy or justice at Delhi, and in utter despair he now determined to try his strength against the old regent. Little did he know at that time that he would have to deal not with Zalim Singh alone but with

1- (a) Thakur Lakshman Dan's manuscript history of Kota.
(b) V. B. P.

2 (a) Tod Vo'. II. p 1437
(1) Thakur Lakshman Dan's Manuscript History of Kota.

3. Kota state Archives of c. 1679. Baharan Ka Lakhar
Ka Parta

the all powerful East India Company which was determined to stand by the usurper and not by the legitimate ruler.

Kishore Singh prepares for an armed conflict

During his march from Delhi to Kota, Kishore Singh gathered about three thousand followers, all devoted to him by the sentiment of loyalty, evoked by his legitimate claim which Zalim Singh was thwarting. Several jagirdars of Bundi espoused his cause when he reached the borders of his homeland. He invited his Hada brethren to muster under his banner for the defence and emancipation of their land. The response was splendid. Hundreds of Hada Rajputs moved on to the camp of Kishore Singh in the beginning of September 1821. Even those who owed everything to Zalim Singh deserted him and elected to help legitimacy out of sheer love of justice and chivalry. Having prepared for a battle, Maharao Kishore Singh addressed to Colonel Tod a letter on the 16th September, 1922.¹

Zalim Singh's position defined by Kishore Singh.

Kishore Singh said that he had full confidence in Zalim Singh, who could continue to conduct the administration of his state as he had done during the reign of his father, but it was not possible for him to get on well with Madho Singh with whom he had deep differences. He should, therefore, be dissociated from the affairs of the Government and assigned a jagir for his maintenance. On Zalim Singh's death his grandson Bappa Lal would be a minister and carry on the Government under the guidance and direction of his ruler, as ministers did in every state; and if everything went on well, the ministership would descend from generation to reneration.¹ Tod did not entertain this letter. He knew that the East India Company was in duty bound to honour the supplemental secret clause.

1. Tod Vol II p 143-29

Zalim Singh consulted by Tod.

Officially Tod had to support the secret treaty, but personally he felt a sort of moral struggle raging inside himself. At times he felt that Zalim Singh was really a usurper. He had served Umed Singh with devotion and distinction, but the ulterior motive of grass and gain was never absent from his mind. He had declined to accept the sanad of Chaumahala unless it was drawn up in his master's name. Then it appeared to be an act of "disinterested magnanimity," but now his motive was exposed. He wanted to be not a Thakur of four Parganas but the ruler of a pretty big state, and desired that it should descend to his heirs and successors in perpetuity. But Tod saw clearly the duty of the East India Company, which was to maintain Zalim Singh in his position as a Regent at any cost, and to see that the administration of the state devolved upon his son, Madho Singh peacefully. At the same time he expected that Zalim Singh might solve the difficulty by proving true to his professions of loyalty and fealty, which were ever on his lips. The unpleasant position in which the East India Company found itself as a result of the secret clause could be eased by Zalim Singh if he did not press the logical fulfilment of the treaty. But the old diplomat did not prove equal to the occasion. When Tod asked him what course of action he proposed to follow, he gave his usual diplomatic and embarrassing reply, "I do not want to blacken my white beard by any act of disloyalty to my Lord." Zalim Singh desired that his and his sons' position should be maintained by the British Government, while he himself should be able to continue to offer his fealty to Kishore Singh, and should not be required to take any measure against the Maharao.¹

The battle of Mangrol.

Tod spoke clearly and firmly, and asked the regent

1. Tod Vol. II p. 1121

to prepare for a battle if he meant business and accept an English officer to command his troops. Zalim Singh mobilized his eight battalions of infantry and fourteen squadrons of horse with thirty two pieces of cannon. This force was put under the command of Millan. As Zalim Singh wanted the British Government to support him so that he might save his face by proclaiming that the battle was fought really by the company and not by him and also that the victory might be assured, two battalions and six squadrons of cavalry with a light battery of horse-artillery were furnished to aid him. The English force was commanded by Major Ridge. The battle was fought near Mangrol on an extensive plain with a small stream skirting it. A last minute effort was made by Colonel Tod to avert the impending conflict but the Maharao did not retrace his steps and the action commenced by a discharge of cannon and fire arms from the regent's whole line. The Maharao had no artillery but his infantry led by his Hada brothers and Saif Ali made such a terrific charge that the Regent's flank was about to break, and if he were not assisted by the British troops, his force would have been annihilated and he himself taken prisoner. The Maharao's men exhibited remarkable gallantry in face of heavy odds and destructive fire but the British cavalry advanced and saved the day, but their two gallant officers Lieutenants Clarke and Ree were killed in action and the commander had a miraculous escape. Kishore Singh retreated losing on the field his brother Prithvi Singh who died of wounds soon after. He was captured and brought to the regent's camp where, it was alleged, poisoned bandages were applied to his wounds which hastened his death. Tod refutes this charge against the regent and says that the treatment was arranged when he was present in the camp, but his statement cannot carry conviction because Tod had hardly any knowledge of the Indian system of medicine.¹

1 (a) ToJ Vol. II p 1440 1444

(b) Archives of Thugana Kotah

Zalim Singh repeats the drama of loyalty.

Kishore Singh left the field and retreated to Nathdwara in utter despair. He was pretty well educated and religiously inclined. Nathdwara, therefore, was a sanctuary for him. There he began to lead a life of retirement and resignation. Victorious in the field, Zalim Singh returned to Kota triumphantly but he did not parade his victory. The news of the defeat of Maharao spread like wild fire and every village began to seethe with discontent and indignation and there was a universal denunciation of Zalim Singh, who had drawn sword against his own master and fired volleys against the Maharao's kith and kin, killing his dear brother Prithvi Singh either by the sword or by poison. Zalim Singh was now eighty one years old and totally blind and extremely unpopular with the Britishers, his only prop. His prestige was gone, his energy had disappeared and his tactics had been exposed. However, Zalim Singh adhered to his life long strategy of cant and cunningness. He entered the castle, stood before the Maharao's throne, refused to put Vishnu Singh on it. In spite of his transferred loyalty and fidelity and shedding tears of sorrow, he remarked, "I am extremely grieved to witness the empty throne. No misfortune can be greater than this for me. The rogues have created a deep gulf between me and my master; but the strength resides in my master's shoes which will continue to inspire and guide me in the discharge of my onerous duties." Thus saying he placed Maharao Kishore Singh's sandals again on the throne, made a very respectful obeissance and retreated.¹

Zalim Singh receives Kishore Singh back in Kota.

Soon after Kishore Singh reached Nathdwara, Zalim Singh realized that it would not be possible for him to carry on

1. (a) Archives of Ghalana Kotri.

(b) Thakur Lakshman Das's manuscript History of Kota State in Hindi

(c) V, B, p. 4103.

without a ruler on the throne. He feared that his end may come any moment, and then Madho Singh might not be able to cope with the difficult situation. He was, therefore, anxious to effect a settlement as soon as it was possible and entered into correspondence with the Maharana of Mewar and requested him to use his good offices for restoring Kishore Singh to his ancestral throne. Triangular negotiations, therefore, commenced among Zalim Singh, the Maharana and the Maharao.

The British Government was also equally anxious to reach a settlement. The battle of Mangrol had brought them bad name and the Kota episode was a blot on their good record of establishing peace and tranquility in Rajputana and Central India. The Maharana commenced negotiations with the British resident at Delhi, who had charge of the states in Rajputana. The quadrangular talk assumed the final shape nine months after the battle of Mangrol, that is in August 1822 when Maharao Kishore Singh, Madho Singh and Colonel Tod met at Nathdwara, and an engagement was signed, according to which the secret clause of the treaty was retained and accepted by Maharao Kishore Singh but certain privileges and powers in limited spheres were conceded to him and arrangements were made for regular and punctual payment of his privy purse. His status was recognized equal to that of the Maharana of Udaipur and the city gardens and the reserved grass-fields were transferred to his control.

When Kishore Singh returned to Kota he was received by Zalim Singh and the political agent at the distance of four miles from the city, and the city assumed a gay appearance on his return, which showed how popular the ruler was among his people. Kishore Singh was ceremoniously seated on the throne and Zalim Singh presented him twenty five gold mohars. After about a fortnight Kishore Singh and Madho Singh met and

embraced each other and expressed regret for the past events.¹ Zalim Singh was delighted to hear of the restoration of mutual relations between the ruler and his son, and he openly expressed regret and reprimanded himself on his misdeeds and turning to Madho Singh said, "It is the fruit of your sins and blunders which has brought all this disgrace and hardships to my lord." The day of reconciliation was the day of culminating triumph for Zalim Singh.

Zalim Singh tours the state.

After this Zalim Singh toured the state. He had heard that there was discontent and dissatisfaction every where and the whole state was on the verge of a general revolt. Zalim Singh was not in a position to hypnotize the people by the force and power of his personality. For twenty five years he had been blind and paralytic. He was now eighty five and his health was failing. People were expecting his end every day. Yet he was pathetically anxious to preserve his prestige and reputation. With this object he undertook this tour and wherever he went he proclaimed the return of the Maharao and pacified the people.² This was the last flicker of his diplomatic existence:

Zalim Singh celebrates his grandson's marriage and dies.

In the March of the following year Zalim Singh celebrated the marriage of his grandson, Madan Singh who was then fifteen years old with the daughter of the Rao of Rampura. It was attended by quite a large number of Maratha Sardars, muslim nobles and a few English officers. Among them there were some

1. (a) Thakur Lakshmandan's manuscript history of Kota in Hindi.

(b) Tod Vol. II p. 1443-1450

2. Thakur Lakshman Dan's history of Kota state in Hindi.

we had been friends of the regent for the last forty or fifty years and with whom he had shared the ups and downs of his life and who had passed through numerous political storms and convulsions. Zalim Singh was now unable to see but he could feel poignantly the mighty change which the passage of time had brought. The marriage was also attended, of course, by the Maharao of Kota and several other chiefs of Rajputana¹. The function was celebrated as usual on a grand scale but it was merely a parade of pompous pageantry, bearing striking resemblance to Zalim Singh's person which was just a heap of worn out bones. The regent was now a spent force without a future and probably a desire.

Zalim Singh had lived now eighty five years. He had passed through countless storms and encountered many difficult situations. The closing scene of his life was an exposure but he had triumphed and insured perpetual dignity and status for his descendants. He could look back upon the fifty seven years of his active and successful life with just pride. It was now time that the drama concluded. If he had lived longer he would have died in greater unpopularity. Death delivered him from physical pain and probably mental agony, in the month of July of 1824 at the Chhaoni of Ram Chandrapura about a mile from Kota. He was cremated on the bank of river Chambal; and a simple cenotaph now marks the spot, the tall and stately residence he had built for himself looking down upon it.

1. Kota state Archives of S. 1890. Basta-9 Lakshmi Ka Bhandar. Jhala Ka gharu Kagad.

CHAPTER VIII

ZALIM SINGH AND RAJPUT STATES

Zalim Singh and Bundi

Since the time of Maharao Durjanshal of Kota, there had existed a serious estrangement between the ruling houses of Kota and Bundi, and so wide had become the gulf that even the ordinary courtesies of complimentry presents on occasions of marriages and deaths had not been observed for the last thirty years. Zalim Singh was anxious to bring about an understanding between them because Kota is an off-shoot of Bundi and the two houses are connected with the ties of blood and it was not proper that they should keep so much apart. An opportunity afforded itself in the monsoon of 1774. Zalim Singh had gone to pay a friendly visit to the Maratha officers stationed at Kesho Rai Pātan when the Diwan of Bundi also came there. Zalim Singh availed of this chance and went to receive Diwan Sukhram at a distance of two miles from the city and brought him to the place of his camp with great honour and affection. They both went to the temple of Kesho Rai for darshan, and there, in a dramatic way which greatly characterised all his actions, Zalim Singh put a leaf of tulsi in his hand and clasping the hand of the Bundi Diwan, Sukhram with the tulsi inside said, "Now we are united in the religious and affectionate tie in the presence of the diety Kesho Rai. Zalim Singh then took Sukhram with him to Kota and presented him to his chief, Maharao Umed Singh, who received the diwan and the nobles and officers of his party with great honour. They were kept guests for seven days and at the time of the departure Sukhram was honoured with a gift of a sarpech, saropav and an

excellent horse. Zalim Singh advised Maharao Umed Singh to send through him a message of congratulations and suitable presents on the accession of Raoraja Bishan Singh on the gadi of Bundi which had taken place about a year ago.¹ Accordingly necessary presents were sent to Bundi with a deputation of Kota.²

Zalim Singh contracted matrimonial alliance with Bundi

Zalim Singh was united with the ruling family of Kota by matrimonial alliance. Now his ambition was to have a matrimonial alliance with the Bundi house. His sudden and surprizing reception of the diwan of Bundi was, in fact, motivated by this distant object in view. The baby ruler of Bundi was then only two years old. The good relations commenced in 1774 were thickened and deepened by Zalim and his continuous efforts in this direction bore the fruits he wanted when Bishan Singh became nineteen year's old.¹ Zalim's daughter Ajab Kanwar Bai was engaged to this young ruler and the marriage was celebrated among scenes of extraordinary pomp and magnificence at Zalim Singh's stately ancestral place in Nanta.

The Marriage of Ajab Kanwar Bai with Bishan Singh (1792)

The marriage was held on the tenth day of the latter half of Ashadh in samvat 1849 (1792 A. D.) The total expenditure incurred amounted to Rs. 2,57,081/15/3.² The marriage party consisted of 12236 men, 208 elephants and 3200 horses. The other guests numbered about 60000 with over seven hundred elephants, horses and bullocks. On the day of the main feast the number of the guests was in the neighbourhood of 90000.³ The marriage was attended by numerous Maratha chiefs and nobles. The

1. V. B. pp. 2608, 3822-25.

2. Ibid. p. 1825-26.

priests, rich magnets, Pindari leaders and their followers, and several ruling chiefs gave suitable presents.¹ Zalim Singh organized this prodigious pomp firstly because he was allying himself to the ruling house of Bundi and secondly because he wanted to impress the people of Kota and those of neighbouring states by the *display of magnificence generally associated in public imagination with the ruling houses of Rajputana.*

Zalim Singh dominates the Bundi affairs

The marriage brought Zalim very close to Bishan Singh. The regent was now about fifty five years old, mature in age and experience, while Bishan Singh was only a lad of nineteen years. The administration of Bundi was conducted by Sukhram and the chief adviser of the ruler was Hamir Singh Nathawat. After the death of the latter Bishan Singh fell under the influence of Krishna Singh Nathawat, who came under the influence of Zalim Singh.

The young prince was advised to send a message to his saintly grand father, Umed Singh, who had voluntarily renounced his kingly position and had become a sanyasi and who was now on his pilgrimage to Jagdishpuri, not to return to Bundi. Umed Singh was a hero of several battles and an experienced administrator. Zalim Singh, therefore, wanted that Bishan Singh should not get his guidance.² The next move of Zalim Singh was to have Sukhram fined and dismissed. Zalim now began to put his own trusted men on posts of power and influence and in course of two or three years practically all the key-posts were occupied by his men. Bishan Singh neither suspected any sinister motive nor possessed guts to oppose Zalim Singh openly. At this time Zalim was at the height of his power. He had reduced Maharao Umed

1. V. B. P. 3915.

2. Kota state Archives of s. 1849. Basta 4. Ajab Kzrwar Bai Re Byoy Ka Kagad.

3. Ibid.

Singh of Kota to a nonentity and had concentrated all real power in his own hands and had thus become a de-facto ruler of the Kota state. It was, therefore, not expected of the boy ruler like Bishan Singh of Bundi to resist the intrusions or encroachments of Zalim Singh on the affairs of Bundi. In a few years so complete had become the domination of Zalim Singh in Bundi that everywhere except inside the palace he ruled supreme.¹

Jhala exposed

Before the people of Bundi, Kota was a glaring example of Zalim Singh's ways of usurping power. The well-wishers of Bishan Singh and those who had the interest of Bundi at their hearts had no difficulty in discerning what Zalim Singh was aiming at. They clearly saw his tentacles spreading and entangling every thing; and thought that the trouble should be nipped in the bud. Bishan Singh, though a boy, was not Zalim Singh's ward. He was an independent ruler and free to accept or refuse Zalim Singh's guidance. Besides, the Maratha trouble was not so serious in Bundi, as it was in Kota; and Bishan Singh was not facing a danger which would force him to seek support of a shrewd and astute politician like Zalim Singh. He was advised that Zalim Singh's power and influence should not be allowed to grow in Bundi, and Umed Singh (Shriji) should be requested to return to Bundi to bless his grandson. On the advice of his faithful followers Bishan Singh wanted to request Umed Singh to return to Bundi but Zalim Singh, in order to demonstrate his solicitude, anticipated him and sent Lalaji Ballal to escort Shriji home.² Meanwhile Shriji was coming home and Lalaji Ballal met him at Sawai Madhopur and assured him of Zalim Singh's

1. Ibid.

2. V. B. p. 3934-35.

1. V. B. pp. 3823-25.

2. (a) V. B. p. 3926.

(b) Lajja Ram Mehta : Umed Singh Charit p. 163-187.

sincerity of purpose. Umed Singh returned to Bundi met his grandson in the temple of Shrirangji where Zalim Singh also was present and appeared to be most anxious to effect reconciliation. Bishan Singh offered sincere apologies and implored forgiveness of his sanyasi grandfather. Bishan Singh now realized his position and began to take personal interest in the administration and was no longer a puppet in Zalim's hands. Thus came to end Zalim Singh's efforts for exploitation and domination of Bundi.

Zalim Singh's dominating power

It was not possible for a weak and young ruler like Bishan Singh to assert his power against Zalim Singh, though he had considerably freed himself from his influence. This enabled Zalim Singh to employ his strategy of persuasion, discussion and coercion which brought several large areas of the Bundi state almost directly under his possession. It is clear that if the policy of non-interference which the East India Company adopted and followed from 1805 to 1817 had continued a few years more, Zalim Singh would have established his complete control, if not on the whole of Bundi, at least on a great part of it and the same fate might have been shared by the Udaipur state also.

Zalim Singh warns Bishan Singh

When Maharao Kishore Singh went to Bundi to escape Zalim Singh's bombardment, he was given a cordial and affectionate reception by Bishan Singh and was treated with great honour and kindness during his stay there. This led Zalim Singh to suppose that with the help of Bundi the Maharao might collect troops and attack Kota. He, therefore, warned the Bundi ruler, through Colonel Tod, that he would be held responsible if the Maharao made preparations for an armed action against him.

(Zalim) Bishan Singh very much resented this letter but he had to submit to the combined dictation of Zalim Singh and the British residents.¹

Zalim Singh's career in Mewar.

Zalim Singh's career in Mewar may be divided into two parts. The first period may be called the period of devoted service and the second the period of ambitious adventure. When Maharao Guman Singh of Kota dismissed Zalim Singh from service, he had no difficulty in finding an honourable job in the Udaipur state. Maharana Ari Singh was then in difficulty. A faction of his nobles had set up a rival to the throne and the Maharana was in search of loyal and powerful supporters against the strong clique. Mahadaji Sindhia had been invited by the supporters of the pretender, and a large amount had been promised to him as a price for his espousing the cause of the rival and seating him on the throne replacing the lawful ruler. At this juncture Zalim Singh appeared on the scene. The Maharana readily took him into his service, gave him a jagir, married to him the daughter of one of his cousins, conferred upon him the title of Rajrana and invited him to help in the impending struggle. Zalim Singh was quite a youngman of about twenty five years of age at that time. But he possessed, besides dash and valour, a sound commonsense and quick intelligence and was gifted with tact and strategy of a very high order. He persuaded several powerful nobles including the big jagirdar of Shahpura to espouse the cause of the Maharana and, what was remarkable, won over two big officers, Raghuji and Daula Mian of Sindhia's army to the Maharana's side. He then employed his diplomatic strategy to bring about some sort of settlement with Sindhia but did not succeed, and when all efforts for a peaceful settlement

2. Tod. Vol. II. p. 1437.

failed and a battle had to be fought on the banks of the Sipra near Ujjain, Zalim Singh fought with remarkable gallantry; but he fell wounded and was captured by Sindhia and imprisoned in the fort of Gangdhar where he passed about a year of comfortable imprisonment. But Zalim Singh was not the man who would resign himself to fate. In the Sindhia's camp he had a friend Trayambak Inglia whose son Ambaji Inglia was even closer to Zalim Singh. Ambaji's wife who was a rakhibandh sister of Mahadji Sindhia was entrusted with the duty of securing the release of her husband's friend as a gift for her rakhi when the occasion arose. The plan was successful and Zalim Singh was released but not until a ransom of sixty thousand of rupees was paid by Ambaji Inglia. It made the two young men life-long friends. Soon after his release he was invited by the ruler of Kota to resume his duties as faujdar.¹

The second phase of his career in Mewar

Zalim Singh's ambition was limitless. After Guman Singh's death he had become the de-facto ruler of Kotah. But this did not satisfy Zalim Singh. He wanted a wider scope for the display of his talents and the fulfilment of his ambitions.² He, therefore, looked round to see in which state he could find a suitable opportunity for him. He had very nearly succeeded in establishing his domination in the Bundi state where he exercised a complete control on the boy ruler and exercised it more or less till the state was taken under British protection. Zalim Singh had learnt by experience that his designs and schemes were likely to succeed where there was a minor ruler. He, therefore, cast his eye on Mewar¹ where Maharana

1. (a) Tod. Vol. I. pp 445-46.

(b) Ojha. Udaipur Rajja Ka Itihas. P. 960-63.

(c) V. V. p. 1150-59.

2. V. V. p. 1716.

Bhim Singh II, a boy of hardly ten years had ascended the throne in the beginning of 1778.

Continued interest in Mewar

Since his first contact with Mewar in 1765 Zalim Singh had been taking interest in that region. He had built a house for him at Udaipur, and when Begun,¹ a jagir of Udaipur was besieged by Mahadhji Sindhia, Zalim Singh saved it from utter ruin or extinction by giving five lakhs to the invader.

Zalim Singh helps Mewar against Behariji Takpir (1774)

Mewar was now in a state of anarchy. Behari Takpir and Ambaji Inglia ravaged the country with impunity. At this stage Zalim Singh marched a force under the command of Lalaji Ballal, (1) for the relief of Mewar. The force under Lalaji Ballal had eight European gunmen, a cavalry, Telangas and auxiliaries. Bundi forces also joined Ballal at Sigoli to cooperate in the defensive measures.

Actions were fought at several places. At Raj Samand the Kota troops fought a sharp and decisive action. Takpir felt shattered and returned to Ujjain. The Kota forces remained out for seventy one days during the entire summer of 1774;

Zalim Singh tours Mewar (1778)

The action of Zalim Singh's troops at Raj Samand made him popular in Mewar. To further establish his popularity, he followed it up by an extensive tour of the Udaipur state. He announced that he was proceeding on pilgrimage to Nathdwara and Kankroli, but in fact he wanted to study personally the rack and ruin of the state due to the factions of Chundawats and

1. Kota State Archives of s, 1831-32 Basta-70 Bhandar -1.

Shaktawats, the interference by the Sindhia and the Holkar and the intrigues of the palace. Zalim Singh was accompanied by Lalaji Ballal, and several jagirdar thakurs. Several musalman officers were also included in the party. He had two hundred troops with two elephants and a park of artillery. It was a splendid cavalcade regaled by feats of wrestlers, music and dance at several camps. The tour began by the end of monsoon and lasted for nine weeks. At Chittore Zalim Singh contacted a number of eminent sardars and gave them good presents. Suitable presents were then moved to Nathdwara and thence to Kankroli. At each place he presented gold mohars and dresses to the chief priests and male and female members of their families.¹

Factions in Mewar

From time to time Zalim Singh sent presents to the Maharana of Udaipur to maintain contact.² His object was to establish his influence in Mewar at a suitable opportunity. This desired chance was offered by the mutual feuds of two factions known as Saktawats and Chundawats, each wanting to have the ruler under their control and exercise ruling power. The ruler was a mere boy and the reins of Government were nominally in the hands of the mother Regent. Till 1782 the ruler was under the influence of the Chundawats who were headed by Rawat Bhim Singh, so complete was their control that the mother regent could not get any money even to celebrate her son's birthday. This led to estrangement and she took the Shaktawats into confidence and appointed a new diwan.² Now was the chance for Zalim Singh to step into Mewar.

1. Kota State Archives of s. 1833-35 Basta 1, Bhandar-1.

2. (a) Kota State Archives of S. 1846. Basta-1

(b) Ibid. s. 1841. Basta-26 Bhandar-1.

(c) Ibid. s. 1846 Basta-3.

(d) Ibid. s. 1836-38 Basta-28 Bhandar-5

3. Ojha Udaipur Ka Itihas. p. 282-85.

Zalim Singh invited to help Mewar

A little earlier than this Mahadji Sindhia had suffered heavy reverses at Lalsot in Jaipur in 1787. After suffering a severe defeat at the hands of the young Raja Pratap Singh of Jaipur he was encamped at Mathura suffering from despair and disease. This offered a welcome opportunity to the Rajput rulers whose large territories had been seized by Mahadji Sindhia. The Maharaja of Jodhpur seized back Ajmer and the mother regent of Udaipur also began to plan the reconquest of the territories which had been alienated by Sindhia. With this object in view she invited Zalim Singh Jhala who arrived accompanied by his friend Lalaji Ballal with a large force of ten thousand, according to Tod, but of five thousand according to more reliable and better sources.¹ On arrival, he found that kaleidoscopic political changes were taking place in Mewar and efforts were being made to bring the two factions together to retrieve the fortunes of the state by taking advantage of the reverses of Mahadji Sindhia.² Jhala Zalim Singh did not want to embroil himself with Sindhia. He did not believe that Sindhia's power was at an end. He had placed his resources at his disposal, and sent his son and Lalaji Ballal to assure him of his loyalty.³ He thought that his participation in the war of reconquest would be a breach of professed friendship. He, therefore, did not stay in Mewar and left for Kota,⁴ but kept his forces in Udaipur at the disposal of a Sukrawat leader, Mohakam Singh of Bhindar.⁵

1. (a) Tod. Vol. I p. 458.

(b) Bhim Vilas. p 88 89.

(c) V. V.

2. Vir Vinod, p. 1706.

3. Vide Aute.

4. Vir Vinod. p. 1707.

5. Vir Vinod, p. 1708.

Zalim Singh's forces participate in reconquest

The Chundawats and the Saktawats sank their differences, and combined together for reseizing the parganas which had been taken by Sindhia. The author of the *Vir Vinod* says that Zalim Singh's forces cooperated with the sardars of Mewar in effecting the reconquest.¹ Zalim Singh was not incapable of duplicity. He might have left for Kota to give an impression to Sindhia that he did not want to be a party to the work of reconquest, and as to the presence of his troops in Mewar he could argue that they were stationed there to help the Saktawats in case there was war against the Chundawats. The Udaipur state without weighing the consequences and without appreciating the situation correctly launched war and not only reconquered the parganas Sindhia had seized but even took Jawad and grossly offended Ahalyabai, with the result that her troops invaded Mewar and inflicted heavy slaughter on them and reseized the parganas.²

Zalim Singh's intervention in factious struggle again (1791)

The struggle between the Shaktawats and the Chundawats had a very temporary lull during the war of reconquest. But it began to rage again. In about 1790 the Chundawats became very powerful and occupied Chittore and the fortunes of the Shaktawats seemed to be at the lowest ebb, but their leader Mokkam Singh advised the Maharana to invite Zalim Singh so that he might bring Sindhia and expel the Chundawats from Chittore.³ Zalim Singh readily responded and came to Mewar along with his friend Ambaji Ingolia. A deputation headed by him and including Ingolia waited on Mahadhaji Sindhia at Pushkar and requested him to release Chittore from the Chundawats and levy on them

1. *Vir Vinod* p. 1709

2. *V. V.* p. 1709, 1710.

3. *V. V.* p. 1713.

a contribution of sixty lacs out of which he could retain forty eight lacs and part with twelve lacs to the Maharana.¹ The proposal was accepted by Sindhia, and Zalim Singh with his troops marched from Kota and invested Hamirgarh, a fort of Dhirat Singh, who was a close friend and adviser of Bhim Singh, the leader of Chundawats, who was occupying Chittore at present. The fort was bombarded by the guns of Ambaji and taken in a few days. The fort of Basi also met the same fate.² By the time the combined forces of Zalim Singh and Ingolia reached Chittore, Sindhia also arrived there with his large troops.³

Zalim Singh arranges a meeting between Sindhia and the Maharana (September, 1791)

Mahadhaji Sindhia had recovered from the shock of his defeat at Lalsote and his French general De Boigne had reorganized his brigades, which had fought bloody battles of Merta and Patan where the Rathors were completely overthrown by him.⁴ Sindhia was, therefore, in high spirits and left-flattered when the Maharana requested him for help. On arrival at Chittore Mahadhji expressed a wish to meet the Maharana. Zalim Singh arranged the interview at Naharmagra. The Rana received the Sindhia with great courtesy which Sindhia reciprocated by escorting the Rana to the besieging army.⁵

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1. (a) V. V. p. 1713
(b) Tod. Vol. I. P. 461.
(c) Ojha. p. 990.
 2. (a) V. V. P. 1724.
(b) Tod. Vol. I. P. 462
(c) Ojha. p. 993
 3. (a) Ojha. P. 990
(b) Tod. Vol. I. P. 462
 4. Tod. Vol. I. P. 464
 5. [a] V. V. P. 1715
(b) Tod. Vol. I. P. 462

Zalim Singh outwitted (October, 1791)

During the short period when Zalim Singh was away from Chittore arranging the interview between the Maharana and Mahadaji, a serious plot developed against him which robbed him of the object he had in view. Zalim Singh never spoke out his secrets even to his closest friends and all his secrets were, therefore, cremated with him, but Ambaji Ingolia was not less clever than Zalim Singh. The more reticent the regent was the greater was the suspicions of Ambaji Ingolia. He, therefore, took the Chundawats in his confidence and spoke out his mind to them. He said, ' It seems to me that Zalim Singh has come out not to render a disinterested service but to achieve an object which, though he does not reveal, can easily be guessed. After crushing the Churidawats he would not care for the Shaktawats. He will treat the Maharana as his ward and will probably occupy Chittore and dominate and exploit Mewar like Kota.' Ambaji was not far from the truth when he apprehended these possibilities. Zalim Singh was feared and respected but not trusted by any body, and who would refute the fear that he might behave in Mewar as he had done in Kota ? Ambaji Ingolia and the Chundawats headed by Bhim Singh became one, and on the advice of Ingolia who did not desire to be deprived of the price of Subedarship of Mewar, Bhim Singh agreed to surrender the fort to the Maharana and offer him due homage, provided Zalim Singh was asked to leave the camp forthwith, When Ingolia threw out the suggestion to Zalim Singh, the latter anticipated him and said, "My master is always pressing me to return and I shall feel much relieved indeed if the Maharana permits me to go." The views and intentions of Bhim Singh were made known to the Maharana by Ingolia, who also requested him to ask Zalim Singh to leave. The whole affair was got up, organized and completed with dramatic quickness and Zalim Singh had to leave Mewar with his troops. (1791)¹

1. [a] Tod. Vol. I. P. 463

[b] V. V. P 1716.

[c] Ojha, P 991

Zalim Singh occupies Jahazpur

In furtherance of his schemes Zalim Singh kept his eye constantly on the events in Mewar. The Shaktawat-Chundawat struggle continued and Zalim Singh lent his support to the Shaktawats. After 1782 Lakhwaada according to the order of the Sindhia, was to replace Ambaji Ingliia. Lakhwa marched into Mewar and dispossessed the chief of Shahpura of his rich pargana of Jahazpur. The Maratha chief was in financial difficulty because he had to pay his troops who were clamouring for payment. Zalim Singh took advantage of this situation and advanced six lacs of rupees to Lakhawaada, who transferred the pargana of Jahazpur to Zalim Singh.² Thus the Kota regent occupied Jahazpur and did not release it till 1819 when Colonel Tod, after the treaty of 1817, forced him to part with it. This occupation of Jahazpur was the beginning of Zalim Sindhi's designs in Mewar.

Zalim Singh covets subaship of Mewar

Zalim Singh's cherished ambition was to become either the Musahib Ala of Mewar by helping the Maharana and crushing the Chundawats or to become the subedar of Mewar on behalf of Sindhia. The first part of the policy he was pursuing since he was invited by the Mother Regent in 1788. The second part was very secret and was being pursued at the Maratha court. Zalim Singh believed not only in armed action but also in commercial and diplomatic transaction, and in case of the Marathas he used to employ mostly the latter method. In the month of August 1809 the Sindhia was experiencing a severe financial distress and wanted at least thirty lacs immediately. Of this amount five lacs was to be obtained from Zalim Singh as a price for the subaship of Mewar. Zalim Singh had been secretly negotiating with Sindhia

2. [a] Tod, Vol. I. P. 472

[b] V. B. PP. 3951-52

for this dignified appointment and had very nearly succeeded twice—first in 1806 when he actually paid him two lacs but did not get the subaship because Ambaji Ingolia who was shrewder than even Zalim Singh out-manoeuvred him, and secondly in August 1809 when Sindhia himself wanted to get five lacs from him. But it seems that the plan failed, either because money was not readily available or Ambaji Ingolia might have smelt the proposal and frustrated it.¹

Zalim Singh Intervenes in Ingolia Lakhawa Contest 1798-99

Zalim Singh had been outwitted by Ambaji Ingolia when the Subahdari of Udaipur seemed to be within his grasp. In spite of this they both continued to be friends at least outwardly. The Chundawats were hostile to Ingolia because he was known to be Zalim Singh's friend. They were friendly with Lakhawa because he was sent by Sindhia to replace Ingolia. Thus the Chundawats sided with Lakhawa and the Shakatawats with Ingolia. The fort of Hamirgarh belonging to the Shakatawats was besieged by the Chundawats and its capitulation seemed to be imminent when Zalim Singh, with his large force, appeared on the scene and the besiegers raised the siege and withdrew. The Chundawats quickly reorganized themselves and strengthened the cause of Lakhawa. Ambaji Ingolia now saw that Zalim Singh could not master the situation and some extraordinary effort was necessary to resist Lakhawa effectively. He, therefore, employed Sutherland and George Thomas to drive out Lakhawa from Mewar. The two European adventurers operated in Mewar against Lakhawa for about one year but could not rout him.²

1. Broughton. p. 175

2. (a) V. V. p. 1721-22

(d) Ojha p. 997

(c) Tod. Vol. I. p. 469-70

Zalim Singh's Contacts

Zalim Singh withdrew his troops to Chhan Mahua in Shahpura where his camp became the centre of much political and social activity. Dudernaic arrived from Balvan.¹ Major Poleman had already come. Lakhwadada and Ambaji Ingliia, the two rival contestants for the subaship of Mewar, were also staying in the camp. Besides, there were Satvaji Phalkya and Bapuji Sindhia. Of all these dignitaries Bapurao Sindhia was most unscrupulous, but at this time he was one with Zalim Singh. He was a large, fat and vulgar looking man and talked and laughed a great deal. He had a reputation of being the least scrupulous chief in the unprincipled darbar of Sindhia, who held him in great esteem.

The dark-complexioned and ill-looking Ambaji Ingliia was senior to Zalim Singh in age and possessed, if not superior, equal shrewdness and astuteness. He was believed to be the master of fortunes, amounting to one crore in hard cash which he had kept at Kota under the protection of Zalim Singh. The fact that he outmanoeuvred the Kota Regent at Chittore and deprived him of his coveted prize evidences his greater cunning and craftiness, but notwithstanding all this, Ingliia was now in the camp. His family was under Zalim Singh's protection at Kota and he set very high value to the support he expected from Zalim Singh. Lakhawa Dada knew no scruple. He lived plainly, behaved intriguingly and thought tortously. Quite naturally he lost the favour of his equally unscrupulous master

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1. (a) Kota state Archives of s. 1856. Basta No. 32
Bhandar 21/1, Information supplied by Halkara from the camp
Chhan Mahua on Aghan badi 7.
 - (b) Ibid. Roznamacha Aghan budi 10.
 1. (a) Broughten p. 51
 - (b) K. S. A. of s. 1856. Basta-32, Bhandar-21/1
 - (c) Tod. Vol. I. p. 486

and died a few months after at Zalim Singh's camp in Chhan Mahua in 1803. Dudernaic was over sixty years old and a free lance in every sense of the word. He joined service in Bharatpur, then went over to Holkar and after a few years of quite meritorious services secretly went over to Sindhia along with a few other officers. Jaswant Rao felt highly mortified by this behaviour and began calling all the French officers 'dagabaz.' For some years past his family had resided under Zalim Singh's protection at Kota. The regent had known him for over thirty five years and understood his importance as a military commander and a strategist. Poleman was an officer of secondary importance but, when associated with Dudernaic, he was a man to count. The assembly of these half a dozen dignatories in an out of the way place of Mewar, about seventy five miles from Kota, hundred and twenty from Udaipur and eighty from Balvan from where Dudernaic was invited, was an event of great political importance. Ingolia and Lakhwadada were the contestants for the subaship. There existed a temporary amity between them at this time. Zalim Singh probably planned to make it more lasting. Bapuji Sindhia was a friend of Zalim Singh and was inclined to support Ingolia. It was only Dudernaic's presence which requires commentry and scrutiny. It was a well known fact that Perron was more friendly to Lakhwa than to Ingolia and he was about to interfere in the Mewar tangle by openly supporting the cause of Lakhwadada. Dudernaic was, therefore, invited from Balban, in order to explore the possibility of neutralizing the partisanship of Perron or helping in finding out a settlement. Dudernaic was received by Zalim Singh and all those present in Chhan Mahua on his arrival and the Regent had several important and confidential consultations with him. Such consultations were held separately with all other chiefs and then jointly with all of them. Zalim Singh dined several times with Dudernaic and with

Lakhawa,¹ and distributed sweets among Dundernaic's retinue.² There was a round of dinners and lunches in the camps of these various chiefs. But these social activities and functions were just to provide opportunities for political discussions.

One more important person who deserves at least a brief notice is Mehta Agar Chand, a devoted and loyal diwan of Maharana Ari Singh. He was considered a supporter of Chundawats but the guiding principle of his life was loyalty to the cause of his master. It was he who was responsible for the gallant defence of Mandalgarh fort when Zalim Singh besieged it. But nothing could stand in the way of friendship of Zalim Singh. He continued to maintain good relations with this devoted servant of the Maharana, and when he was taken seriously ill Zalim Singh wrote to Dalel Khan to send Bala Batt to Mandalgarh for the treatment of Agar Chand but he died in the mid winter of 1799.³

It seems that nothing came out of the political discussions which were held at Chhan Mahua in the winter of 1799. Ingolia and Lakhwa could not be reconciled. The former, therefore, fell back upon his own resources and engaged George Thomas and Southerland to fight for him against Lakhwadada.⁴ The war went on for about one year but it does not concern Zalim Singh and, therefore, may be passed over,

Zalim Singh invites more troops from Kota (1800-1801)

After the diplomatic negotiations in Zalim Singh's camp

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1. Kota State Archives of s. 1856. Basta 32 Bhandar 21/1. Information supplied by a halkara on Aghān Budi 7th from the camp Ohhan Mahua.
 2. Ibid. Information of Aghān Budi, 8th.
 3. Kota State Archives of s. 1856, Basta No. 22 Bhandar 21/1. Roznamacha Aghān Budi Paush
 4. (a) V. V. p. 1722-1730.
(b) Ojha. p 998-1000.

at Chhan Mahua in 1799 fell through, Zalim Singh clearly saw that the trouble in Mewar would increase and he would get an opportunity to intervene. He also apprehended danger to Jahazpur in the impending contest between Lakhwa and the two European military adventurers. At the same time he was also anxious to retain and constitutionalize the occupation of Jahazpur which he was temporarily occupying to realize the even lacs of rupees he had advanced to Lakhwadada. All these designs had to be backed by a strong force.

Zalim Singh, therefore, ordered fresh troops from Kota consisting of three state platoons of the total strength of 1797, eight nishans each under a separate officer and all totalling 548. The Jinsi had 181 gunners and their 222 followers. The three Raj platoons were organized on European model and so was the artillery. The other groups were more or less auxiliary. The officer commanding was a Brahman but all other officers except one who was a Rajput were Musalmans. Zalim Singh generally favoured the Muslims to counterbalance the power of the Rajputs, but on this occasion he considered it political that the troops should be more or less exclusively Musalmans so that they might have no scruples in fighting a sort of war of aggression in Jahazpur, and if need be also against the Maharana. There were regular arrangements for the disbursement of the salary on a fixed day and for medical aid. There was a Vaidya and several dressers and Zarras with the troops.¹

Zalim Singh defeated the Maharana—

In 1803 the Ministers of the Maharana put three Maratha chiefs in custody. One of them, Balarao was Ingli's brother. The Maharana, being afraid of Sindhia, wanted to release them,

1. Kota State Archive of s. 1a57. Bast8 36 Bhandar 21/1
Sigha Topkhana.

but his Sardars would not agree. To get out of the impasse, he sent a letter with his two trusted servants to Maharao Umed Singh of Kota requesting him to send Zalim Singh to his help.¹ This was a great opportunity for Zalim Singh. He saw that by their release he would please Sindhia and Ingolia and help the Maharana out of a difficult tangle, as also crush his opponents, the Chundawats. On his arrival, the Maharana sent him a secret message that he was coming to fight against him under the pressure of the Chundawats, but he did not mean business, and that Zalim Singh also should not care to put in a sincere effort, but after a little show of action should come up to him with his terms which would be accepted and the Marathas released.²

The Maharana faced Zalim Singh at Cheja Ghati where the battle was fought for four days. Zalim Singh then met the Maharana and said that the fight would cease if the three Maratha nobles were released. The Maharana accepted the demand, the fight ceased and the Marathas were released. Zalim Singh behaved towards the Maharana with respectful humility. He presented himself before him, asked forgiveness for what had happened³ and with his characteristic politeness said, "I am at your service."

In the battle there were heavy casualties on both sides. More than 300 of Zalim Singh's men were wounded. An amount of twenty five hundred was distributed among them and a compensation of rupees forty per man was given to the families of those who were killed.⁴ This shows that Zalim Singh's administration of the defence department was very systematic and regular. He

1. Kota State Archives. Maharana Bhim Singh's letter to Maharana Umed Singh dated Jeth Sudi 1, s. 1858 and Aghan Sudi 13, s. 1858

2. Vir Vinod. p. 1733

3. Vir Vinod, p. 1734.

4. Kota state Archives of s. 1858, Basta 83 Bhandar 21/1

paid punctually and compensated immediately and granted family allowances quickly and for everything he had set rules.

Balarao and his associates release (April 1802)

The Maratha chiefs were released soon after Zalim Singh obtained the victory. Ambaji Inglia felt deeply indebted to him for securing the release of his brother, and Sindhia must have been highly pleased by the detence of the Maratha honour. Balarao's release was a distinguished service which Ambaji could not forget. He was now about eighty years old. Ten years older than Zalim Singh, he was the only man in the circle of his friends who was his equal in wisdom and cunning.

Zalim Singh occupies Jahazpur for war Indemnity (1803)

Zalim Singh had incurred heavy expenditure in repeatedly mobilizing his troops to participate in the factious trouble which was raging in Mewar for the last several years, but he was never in a position to inflict any war indemnity on the state. Now he had defeated the Maharana and shaken the power of the Chundawats and, therefore, felt free to demand an adequate compensation. He had already acquired a rich and strategic pargana of Jahazpur by paying six lacs of rupees to Lakhwadada but it was only a temporary arrangement. After the battle of the Cheja ki Ghati he was in a position to dictate terms and demanded that the pargana of Jahazpur should be assigned to him for the money he had advanced and would advance to the ruler of Mewar. Jahazpur, assigned to Zalim Singh,¹ contained eighty four towns,² and villages, twenty two of which were inhabited exclusively by

1. (a) V. V. p. 1733 and 1739.

(b) Ojha. p. 1010

(c) Tod. Vol. I. p. 474

(d) K. S. A. of s. 1865, Basta 65 Bhandar 21/9

2. Ninety according to K. S. A. of s. 1866. Basta 73 Bhandar 21/1

Minas. The Maharana thought that Zalim Singh had rendered him valuable service and the Maharao had done him a good turn. He, therefore, sent a very polite letter of thanks to him.¹

Zalim Singh turns out Bhaskar Bhau from Mewar in 1803

Holkar, enraged by the Maharana's breach of faith, marched into Mewar and levied a heavy contribution. Holkar went away but his general Bhaskar Bhau stayed on and ravaged the country. Then on the request of the Maharana, Zalim Singh sent an army to expel him. As the Holkar and the Sindhia both were then in difficulty, Bhaskar Bhau was not in a position to make a stiff stand against Zalim Singh's troops and left Mewar. The casualties in the Kota forces were so heavy that Zalim had to distribute Rs. 6,969/4/- among the wounded and the families of those who were killed.

Trouble continues in Jahazpur

The pargana of Jahazpur was held by sheer force of arms. The population of the area, specially the Minas and the Gujars, continued to create trouble inspite of frequent military actions by Zalim Singh's troops. The Regent imposed on this region all the taxes which he levied on the people of Kota. But the warlike Minas never paid them regularly or easily. They avoided even the payment of usual land revenue. Whatever collection was made was done by the troops. Usually all taxes were resisted. On every occasion the minas encountered the troops and only when they were overpowered or suppressed they paid the taxes. Several times pretty major actions were fought. When troops arrived at a certain village all males came out to meet them either for a pitched fight or for harrassing movements. Zalim Singh's troops used to set fire to the villages to force the Minas to subjection, and

1. Kota State Archives. The Maharana's letter to the Maharao dated Kartik Sudi 12, s. 1858.

harvested their crops. The Minas on the other hand set fire to their crops to deprive Zalim Singh of any gain. This happened every year at harvest times and caused considerable sufferings, casualties and cruelties to the people, as also loss of men and material to Zalim Singh. In order to prevent fraternization the army of occupation was exclusively muslim except the officer in command.

Zalim Singh advances money to the Maharana

The factional warfare between Chundawats and Shaktawats which continued for about twenty years, the repeated raids and exactions now by the Sendhia, now by the Holkar and now by Mir Khan Pindari, had spelt total ruin of Mewar, as a result of which the state had sunk into deep financial distress.¹ So much so that the Maharana was experiencing extreme difficulty even with regard to his personal expenses. Sometimes there was no money available even for celebrating his birthday, nay, even for purchasing daily necessaries of life.² His sole helper in these days of distress was Zalim Singh, who from time to time used to advance pretty large sums of money till in 1817 they piled up to the huge figure of Rs. 7064553/-³ The detailed account of the debts is preserved in tact in the archives of Kota.

Zalim Singh arranges Maharana Bhim Singh's Marriage 1815.

Zalim Singh wanted to keep the Maharana of Udaipur under his perpetual influence and therefore, making promises of several kinds of help, persuaded him to marry the princess of Kota in 1815. The Maharana came to Kota by way of

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1. (a) V. V. p. 1740-41.
(b) Kota state Archives Bahi. s. 1872.
 2. (a) Tod. Vol. I. 495-96.
(b) Ojha, p. 1012-13
 3. Kota State Archives. Bahi s. 1872

Chittore, Begun and Bhainsrod and married Kishore Kanwar daughter of Maharao Umed Singh. The daughter of Vishnu Singh, son of Umed Singh was married to Amar Singh, the heir apparent of Mewar, whose younger brother Jawan Singh was married to the daughter of the Jagirdar of Indergarh. Zalim Singh did not implement the extravagant promises of financial help which he had made and which are made generally on such occasions. The Maharana left Kota much depressed and disappointed.¹ Zalim Singh's object in arranging this marriage was not to help the Maharana but himself. This became evident in 1817 when Metcalfe invited the ruler of the various states in Rajputana to send their representatives to Delhi to negotiate terms of protective alliances with the East India Company.

Zalim Singh's offer to help the Maharana (1817)

Zalim Singh hastened to write to the Maharana that, if required, his services were at his disposal in negotiating the terms of the political alliance with the British Government. No body had any doubt in the political wisdom and statemanship of the experienced diplomat but Maharana Bhim Singh had a very discouraging example before him. Zalim Singh had, by his overbearing behaviour, reduced the Maharao of Kota to a non-entity and it was feared that he would strengthen his position still further by contracting alliance with the new power. It was an open secret to every one now that Zalim Singh exploited every occasion to his advantage and benefitted both by the weakness and strength of the man with whom he was dealing. Bhim Singh was, therefore, advised to decline the offer which he did with the greatest politeness, and thus escaped political exploitation at the hands of Zalim Singh. To Udaipur he had advanced a loan of seventy lacs and helped the Maharana with men and money

on several occasions and had occupied the pargana of Jahazpur with its several forts for about two decades. The territory of Udaipur was torn and tattered and there was hardly any man in Mewar who could be considered in wisdom and foresight equal of Zalim Singh. If the negotiations were entrusted to him he would have very probably accepted the usual and uniform draft proposed by Metcalfe and simultaneously got inserted a secret or open clause permitting perpetual occupation of Jahazpur and possibly of some area more. Zalim Singh was a colossus, for the resting of whose two legs Kotah was too small a place.

Zalim Singh relinquishes Jahazpur

Colonel Tod was very sympathetic to Mewar. He loved its heroic legends and traditions and was sorry to witness its rack and ruin wrought by the ravages of the Marathas. He wanted to restore Mewar to its original size and, therefore, planned that all the parganas which had been alienated by Sindhia, Holkar, Zalim Singh or Mir Khan should be taken away from them and reincorporated in Mewar parent territory. Accordingly he negotiated with Zalim Singh for the restitution of the pargana of Jahazpur to Mewar. Zalim Singh was under a deep debt of gratitude to Tod and the East India Company, and therefore, did not press his claim and under pressure of the British returned the pargana to the Maharana with good grace. The letter which he wrote to the Maharana while relinquishing control of Jahazpur etc deserves to be quoted in full. It marks the end of Zalim Singh's political relations with the state of Mewar. "Shri Maharao Umed Singhji had advanced you money as debt on your request, for which there are bonds and documents in his possession. For this debt you had assigned the parganas of Jahazpur, Sanganer etc. to him. In this respect negotiations were held through Captain Tod but your Highness have rejected all our claims. Therefore,

the places referred to above are being relinquished; and for the pleasure of the Sahib Bahadur this receipt is being submitted and it is hereby agreed that no repayment of the debt due from you would be demanded in future.¹

1. K. S. A. of s. 1866-1890, Basta 75 Bhandar 1

CHAPTER IX

Zalim Singh's Administration

Zalim Singh's Position

Zalim Singh was a de-facto ruler of the Kota state from 1770 till his death in 1824. His usurpation of power was complete in every sense of the word, His position was like that of Haider Ali in Mysore, Peshwa Bajirao in poona or the Saiyad brothers at Delhi. The Maharao was a mere shadow. All power had centred in the hands of Zalim Singh. But the constitutional formality was maintained. All orders concerning internal administration were issued in the name of the Maharao, though Zalim Singh's name was invariably associated with his, not as a Diwan or Faujdar but as a sort of co-ruler, and later on his son's name also began to be inserted. The correspondence with the rulers of the other states was carried on in the name of the Maharao, evidently because the other rulers would not like to address or be addressed by Zalim Singh. But this was a mere farce; because the letters were dictated by Zalim Singh and the Maharao could neither add nor subtract any substantial word. The formality, therefore, did not serve even as a mere blind because every body knew that Zalim Singh was the director of all state affairs. Hence during about half a century Zalim Singh was practically the head of the state. Hence every aspect of administration are the impress of the master mind. The Maharao had been pushed in the back ground. Guman Singh had no health and Umed Singh possessed no courage to oppose him. Kishore Singh did question his authority but it was not

effective. Zalim Singh's son acted as a faujdar during the time Zalim Singh had lost his eyesight and was prevented by his extreme infirmity to attend to day to day business. But the direction of all important affairs was in Zalim Singh's hands.

Madho Singh's position

After Zalim Singh's death, his son Madho Singh succeeded him without any formal recognition by the Maharao. In doing so he took his stand on the supplemental clause of the treaty. He ruled for ten years, for four years during Kishore Singh's time and for six years during his adopted son, Ram Singh's time. Madho Singh introduced no changes in the structure of the administration, his rule is therefore, a decade of the continuation of Zalim Singh's administration.

Madan Singh's position

Madho Singh's son, Madan Singh assumed the faujdarship of Kota in 1834. Again the position and power devolved on him on his father's death, according to the provision of the secret clause. He acted as faujdar only for six years. In 1840 he was relieved of his charge and made an independent ruler of Jhalawar by the British Government. His rule was a period of constant differences and conflicts between him and the Maharao. But the machinery of administration was the same as it had been perfected by Zalim Singh. Thus the period of seventy years from 1770 to 1840 is the period of Zalim Singh's administration. And for about thirty years after it no reforms or changes were introduced. The first attempt for modernizing the administration under the British influence was made in 1870, twelve years after the mutiny. Hence there is nothing wrong in considering the period from 1770 to 1870 as the century of Zalim Singh's administration. But this whole period does not fall within the purview of this work which deals only with the personal administration of Zalim Singh,

Zalim Singh's colleagues

Zalim Singh had nothing like ministry or a council to assist him in conducting the administration, but he used to consult those in whom he had confidence. His life-long friend, adviser and collaborator was Lalaji Ballal. He was his negotiator, adviser, financier, general and in fact everything. He was Sindhia's agent but mostly he did Zalim Singh's work. This arrangement was possible because what Sindhia particularly cared for was a tolerably regular receipt of tributes. When this was done Ballal was left to serve Zalim Singh as he liked. The relations of Zalim Singh with Sindhia also were quite friendly. Hence he did not object to Ballal's service to Zalim Singh. He died about ten years earlier than Zalim Singh, full of years and honours at the age of about seventy years. Another man of Zalim Singh's confidence was Dalel Khan, a Pathan of Delanpur village in the pargana of Aklera in the Kota state. He rose very rapidly and became the officer commanding of the state forces which numbered over fifteen thousand. He was deeply devoted to Zalim Singh and served him with remarkable loyalty. His son and grandson were both in the military service and enjoyed high rank and status. Shivdan Singh, the chief of Gainta, was perhaps the only Hada Rajput trusted by Zalim Singh. He was a man of brains and talents and was employed by Zalim Singh for diplomatic work. He served Zalim Singh with sincere devotion till the difference between the Regent and the Maharao developed in to an open conflict. At that critical moment Shivdan Singh left Zalim Singh but did not actively help the Maharao.

Centralized Government

The system of government was highly centralized. All directions, commands, orders, instructions, rules, regulations and laws emanated from Zalim Singh. He dealt directly with the pargana officers. Even the minutest matter was decided by him.

During his absence the day to day work was carried on by his son Madho Singh, and when he also was absent, by Dalel Khan, In the absence of Zalim Singh and Madho Singh, orders were issued in Dalel Khan's name and he was styled as Maharaj Dalel Khan. The following order will explain the form employed :—

“By order of Maharaj Maharaoji Shri Umed Singhji and faujdar Rajrana Zalim Singhji, Kanwarji Shri Madho Singhji, the Patel, Patwari; businessmen and thirty six communities are hereby informed that they should settle in the town of Mandawar with confidence. They are exempted from the taxes. This exemption will have perpetual effect. The collectors are prohibited from levying these taxes. Hindus in the name of cow and Muslims in the name of pig.”

“By order of Maharaj Kaptanji Shri Dalel Khanji the Patel, Patwari, peasants and gentlemen of Kandapal and Anand khera are hereby informed as follows, ‘You should stay in the villages with confidence, cultivate the land and do sowing. The assessment as done in 1853 shall stand. Beyond this there shall be no interference with you.’ Chait Budi 7, Sanwat 1856.

The form of the letters addressed by the Pargana officers was as follows :—

To Shri Maharajadhiraj Maharaoji Shri Umed Singhji

or

Shri Maharaj Rajrana Shri Zalim Singhji

or

Shri Khanji Dalel Khanji

Hawalgir, Patwari, Patel of Pargana.....respect-
fully submit that.....etc. Miti Fagun Sudi 1
Samvat 1836.

The Pargana Officers

For administrative purposes the state territories were divided into parganas, and each pargana into tadas. A tafa

consisted of several villages, sometimes even as many as fifteen. The size of the parganas or the tafas was not uniform. But no pargana contained less than forty villages, and the biggest contained as many as 140. The highest officer in a pargana was the Havalgir who was generally a Rajput, but there were Brahmans, Kayasthas and others also among them. The Havalgir was in general charge of the Pargana. He was a Civil and Military officer whose duty consisted of collection of revenue, maintenance of peace and order, supply of timely information, rehabilitation of areas plundered by raiders, defence of the parganas etc. In fact there was nothing concerning the pargana which he was not expected to do. The salary of the Havalgir was from twenty to thirty rupees a month, but he had a free conveyance, residence and a good retinue to attend on him. Associated with him were the Chaudhari and Qanungo whose duty was to maintain a record of the cultivated land and promote agriculture. Since the downfall of the Mughal Empire his importance had considerably declined. During the Mughal period he was appointed by the Emperor and had direct connection with the Imperial officers, and was expected to interest himself in the various phases and aspects of the pargana administration, and keep the Imperial Secretariate well-posted about the events and affairs in the state. In Zalim Singh's time a Patwari was in charge of a Tafa. His duty was to maintain record of lands held by individual farmers, the area of each field, and the government's share in the estimated yield of each field; the payment made by the peasant and the arrears outstanding against his name. The Chaudhari and the Qanungo also were invested with similar functions, their duties were general, and they served the Imperial government, not the state. The Qanungo generally recorded how much land in the pargana was actually under cultivation and how much it yielded, and what were the possibilities of bringing more land under cultivation, and how it could be promoted or encouraged. Zalim Singh did not care for the Chaudhari or Qanungo who gradually

receded into the background and the Patwari acquired more importance.

The village officials

The most important village official was the Patel. He was a very old institution, not a creation of Zalim Singh. The Patel was to the village what hawalgir was to the pargana. For every aspect of administration concerning the village, he was responsible. His main duties were collection of revenue and maintenance of peace and order. These were the essential functions of a government in that period, but the Patel was also the head of the village panchayat which decided good many cases. All the problems of the village, namely pastures, construction of houses, sale of land for buildings, care of temple, repair of wells etc were solved by him, and if the state help was necessary it was secured through him. For all matters concerning the welfare of the village he was the official, social and cultural head, and the whole village easily and conventionally submitted to his authority. Under him were two petty but very useful officials-Sansari (Police Choukidar) and Balai (Revenue peon). The entire village life functioned under the guidance, direction and assistance of the Patel, and the Sansari and Balai implemented the directions he gave. Zalim Singh raised the status of the Patels and considerably increased their importance. This proved very helpful to the administration and gave a healthy direction to the village life.

MILITARY ADMINISTRATION

Zalim Singh's regime can be characterized as the military rule. No other type of rule was possible during the period in which he struggled and flourished. However, his out-look was not purely that of a soldier. He was also a statesman and administrator in equal measure.

The Officer Commanding

For a long period Zalim Singh was himself the head of the

army. But about 1780 he discovered a talented Pathan named Dalel Khan. He rose to be the chief of the army and enjoyed that position till his death. Dalel Khan was second in importance to Zalim Singh or his son. He not only commanded a large army but looked after the general administration of the state during Zalim's absence. His rank was only that of a captain but he was commanding almost a division and was practically a general. His salary, as shown in the paysheet, was sixty rupees a month, but he lived like a big jagirdar. He owned two big mansions which are still existant. His mausoleum is a small but lovely and graceful building. The wife and daughter of the French general Dudermaic used to be his guests. He must have held a good jagir to enable him to maintain his standard of living.

The strength of army

The total strength of the army was sixteen thousand, and consisted of three main wings:—Infantry, Cavalry, (Rasala and Paigah) and Jinsi (artillery).¹ There was also a camel corps armed with jamburas and Dhamakas (big barrel shot guns). Besides, there were garrison in almost all the forts big and small, but the fort of Shahabad, Shergarh, Gagron and Manoharthana were specially strongly garrisoned because they were situated at strategic points. At strategic points on routes entering the state there were Chhawanis or camps where large troops were stationed. The pindaris were considered specially useful for this purpose. There was a service corps which helped in the collection of revenue, in carrying dak and executing miscellaneous orders like summons etc. of the hawalgirs. They were used for quelling minor disturbances and for maintaining peace and order. The army pervaded and dominated the entire machinery of

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1866. Basta—4 Bhandar—3
Hukmon ki Talikan.

administration. The annual expenditure on army in samvat 1866 or 1809 A. D. was Rs. 12,08,150/. No wonder, therefore, that it consumed the major portion of the annual state income which was Rs. 22,10,006/-.

The Kota state army, like the armies of all other Rajput states, consisted also of levies furnished by the Jagirdars according to the Jagirs they were enjoying. The levies consisted of foot and horse both. They assembled when commanded for offensive or defensive purposes..

Army reorganized

By 1800 Zalim Singh felt the necessity of reorganizing the army on European model. He realized the importance of this change after his personal contact with European military adventurers like Jean Baptiste, Dudermaic, Plumet, Poleman and Perron, whose trained brigades he had seen both in camp and in action on several occasions. The army thus organized consisted of infantry; horse, camel corps and artillery. The most remarkable feature of reorganization was regularity and punctuality of payment. The four wings were efficiently remodelled and the officers were properly graded.

Infantry

The officer commanding this wing was Zulfikar Khan, grandson of Dalel Khan, the general officer commanding. Under Zulfikar Khan there were fourteen paltans (Platoons) each commanded by an adjutant. Of the fourteen adjutants one was a Rajput and the rest were mostly Pathans.¹ The size of the paltans was not uniform. One paltan consisted of 451 sipahis, (sepoys) another of 1832 and yet another of as many as 2368.²

1. K. S. A. of s. 1890. Basta—9 Lakshmiji Ka Bhandar.

2. (a) K. S. A. of s. 1861. Basta—65 Bhandar 21/1

(b) K. S. A of s. 1860. Basta—43 Bhandar 21/1

(c) K. S. A. of s. 1869. Basta—86 Bhandar 21/1

A paltan consisted of nishan, which was commanded by a subedar, under whom were a jamadar, a hawaldar, a nishan bardar and a kot hawaldar¹. Each nishan had from fifty to hundred and fifty men. Each paltan contained one adjutant, one major, and as many subedars and bardars as there were nishan in it. For each nishan there was generally one jamadar, but sometimes there were more than one, and a big nishan contained even five jamadars. This applies also to the Hawaldars. The number of hawaldars was generally 1/6th of the number of Sepoys. The following statement gives the total number of officers, sipahis, and followers in 1809 :—

Adjutants	...	...	12
Majors	...	...	8
Subedars	...	...	142
Jamadars	...	...	201
Nishan bardars	...	...	255
Hawaldars	...	...	1732
Dressers (Zarra )	...	...	16
Band men	...	...	506
Bhishtis	...	...	369
Hukkawalas	...	...	20
Thakurs	...	...	24
Religious teachers	...	...	1
Mistries	...	...	62
Sarwan	...	...	52
Barkandaz	...	...	25
Clerical staff	...	...	54
Ghadawali	...	...	35
Nakib	...	...	24
Mashalchi (Torch bearers)	...	...	17
Mochi (Shoe makers )	...	...	5

1. K. S. A. of s. 1860, Basta—46 Bhandar 21/1

Tailors	...	...	5
Chobdar	...	...	11
Cooks	...	...	7
Dhobis	...	...	3
Mehtar	...	...	1
Sepoys	...	...	10,395 ¹

Eace paltan was called by a different name like Narayan paltan, Khas paltan, Gopal paltan. Hussaini paltan, Nazeem paltan; Dhamaka paltan, Ardali (Orderly) paltan, Jafari paltan, Raj paltan etc.²

Salaries and other Emoluments

The salaries of the sepoy and the officers were as follows :—

1. Adjutant	Rs. 40/— p. m.
2. Troop officer or Company officer	Rs. 25/— to Rs. 40/—
3. Subedar	Rs. 15/— to Rs. 25/— per month. ⁴
4. Jamadar	Rs. 10/— to Rs. 15/— p. m.
5. Hawaldar	Rs. 8/— to Rs. 10/— p. m.
6. Nayab Hawaldar	Ra. 6/— to Rs. 8/— p. m.
7. Sepoy	Rs. 5/— to Rs. 6/— p. m.
8. Bajawala	Rs. 7/— to Rs. 10/— p. m.
9. Gharhawali	Rs. 3/— to Rs. 4/— p. m. ³
10. Beldar	Rs. 3/— p. m.

When the troops operated outside the Kota state, for instance in Jahazpur area, they were given a dearness allowance,

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1869, Basta 55 Bhandar 21/1

2. K. S. A. of 1860. Basta 46 Bhandar 2/11

3. Ibid. of s. 1858. Basta. 33 Bhandar 21/1 and s. 1865 Bhandar 21/1 Basta 65.

4. Ibid. of s. 1865 Basta 65 Bhandar 21/1

equal to about $\frac{1}{3}$ of their salary.¹ Maintenance allowance was paid to next of kin of those who were killed in action, and to those who were disabled and rendered incapable of military service.² This was about half the salary of the sepoy killed or $\frac{1}{3}$ of the salary of the officer.³ When a sepoy or an officer resigned with permission he was given a lump sum to maintain himself for some time and also journey expenses from the place of his service to the place of his destination.⁴ At the time of the marriage of a daughter or a son or on the death of father, monetary help was extended to a sepoy or an officer and it was not adjusted against his salary. When troops were mobilized some money was distributed among them as inducement to proceed on active service and to make provision for the maintenance of family left behind. This was generally about two months salary not to be adjusted against the monthly salary.⁵

✓ Naga Paltan

Besides the fourteen paltans mentioned above there was a paltan of the Nagas. They were Dadu Panthi sadhus who had made military service their profession. The paltan consisted of four jamats each under a sadhu commander whose names were :— Mahant Santokh Das, Mahant Narayandas, Mahant Sarjiwan Das and Mahant Mangi Ram. They were under an officer commanding who was also a sadhu. The Dadu Panthi sadhus did not marry but adopted young boys as their chelas who inherited their privileges and positions. Their dress consisted of a kachha and a pagri and their bodies were smeared with yellow earth. Their weapons were generally

1. K. S. A. of s. 1861. Basta 69 Bhandar 21/1

2. K. S. A. of s. 1860. Basta 43 Bhandar 21/1

3. Ibid,

4. K. S. A.

5. K S. A.

swords and shields. When not in active service, they were kept usefully employed in harvesting, in road construction or in other jobs. To begin with they were volunteers, organized for the defence of Hinduism against the atrocities of Aurangzeb and his successors. But in course of time they realized that they could not maintain themselves independently and, therefore, got themselves attached to the armies of the Rajput chiefs of Rajputana. As these armies were remodelled on European pattern the Nagas lost their importance and were disbanded in 1834¹.

Tilanga and Dhamaka paltans

Of the fourteen paltans mentioned above two deserve special notice, the Dhamaka paltan and the Tilanga paltan. The Tilanga paltan was also known as Nazeem paltan. Its officer commanding was perhaps Nazeem Khan after whom it was popularly known. Under him were three commanders who were all Musalmans. The number of sepoys in this paltan was 898 divided into twenty four Nishans of which six were under Madari Khan, seven under Sheikh Subarati Khan and the rest under Saif Ali. They were all trained on European lines by Gordhandas, the second son of Zalim Singh, who had received military training under an European officer. He used to inspect the parades of and give necessary instructions and directions to other paltans as well.² The Dhamak paltan consisted of about two thousand men divided into three sub-paltans or 'bedas', each under a commanding officer named Alam Khan, Muazzam Khan and Madari Khan. Under Alam Khan there were eight nishans of the total strength of 735 and under Muazzam Khan there were eight nishans of the total strength of seven hundred. The

1 (a) K. S. A. of s. 1861. Basta 69 Bhandar 3

(b) K. S. A. of s. 1868 70 Basta 72 Bhanbar 3

2. K. S. A. of s. 1865. Basta 63 Bhandar 21/1

third beda under Madari Khan was generally attached to the Tilanga paltan for purpose of drill and training but when troops were mobilized it was bodily transferred to the Dhamaka paltan. The paltan was so called because each sepoy had a small but broad barrel gun which was fixed up to the saddle of a camel in such a manner that it could be turned to the right, left or front and was fired by striking a piece of steel against a piece of quartz near the trigger. About 1/3 of the number of the sepoys in this paltan had camels to ride but the rest were foot and carried the gun or the Dhamaka, from which the paltan derived its name. There was also a small paltan of hundred and thirty five men under a Rajput attached to this paltan. The annual budget was 99,668/8/-¹

Aligols

In each paltan except the Dhamaka and naga paltan there were two or three nishans of Aligols. They were bodies of shirmishers, armed according to the fancy of each individual, and without any sort of discipline. They consisted principally of Musalmans; and had acquired their name from their method of charging the enemy in a gol, or group, and invoking the aid of Ali in their onset.² Zalim Singh paid them the same salary as to the other sepoys. There were aligols in armies of Sindhia and Holkar also but there they were paid a trifling salary. By way of compensation, they were allowed to plunder at their discretion. Of course no such indiscipline could be allowed by Zalim Singh.

Ardali paltan

One of the fourteen paltans was known as Ardali paltan (orderly paltan). It consisted of 2551 men divided into

1. Kota state Archives of S. 1865 Baste—63 Bhandar 21/1

2. Broughon, P. 50

three bedas known as orderly beda, company beda and Dhamaka beda comprising ten, seven and nine nishans respectively. The annual budget was Rs. 7,58,346/10/— . The sipahis of the Ardali beda were detailed as follows :—

Zalim Singh	631
Madho Singh	214
Gordhan Das	179
Darbar (H. H.)	156
Maharaj Kumar Sahib	62
Maharaj prithi Singh and Vishnu Singh	56

These men formed the escort of the ruler and his son and of Zalim Singh and his son, whenever they moved from Nanta to the city palace or back or in the neighbourhood of the capital. Whenever they moved out a longer distance they had portable guns drawn by horses or bullocks with them and for this purpose seventy eight golandazes and ten guns which were mostly used only by Zalim Singh and his sons because the Maharao and his sons' movements were very much restricted.¹

Seva ki sena

The temple at Nathdwara was the main shrine in Rajasthan, It was held in great reverence by the people and princes both, and every Rajput state had detailed some troops of its own for the protection of the temple and the deity, Zalim Singh maintained two hundred and two sepoy, two subedars and two Nishan bardars, forty six hawaldars, one biledar, with one gun and four golandazes at Nathdwara at the state expense. The annual budget of these troops was Rs. 12,095/3/—²

1. K. S. A. of S. 1866 Basta—1 Bhandar—3

2. Ibid of S. 1875. 112. 21/1

Miscellaneous duties of the military :—

The military had to perform several civil duties also. Separate departments of Agriculture, Public Works and Police were not in existence. Even the Revenue department sometimes depended on military. Various other departments had not yet been created.¹ These troops looked after the safety of the state farms, constructed roads and collected the revenue from the villages assigned to the military department to meet its expenditure. Another paltan furnished the garrisons of the forts, both big and small. Soon after he was appointed as faujdar, Zalim Singh inspected the forts of the state in 1768. He had an inventory prepared of the articles found therein, namely gun powder, cannon balls, jute etc.² There were seventeen forts in the state of Kota, of which the forts of Shergarh, Barsana, Gagron, Shahabad and Kota were considered major forts and were specially garrisoned. With the permission of the quiledar, the garrison was at the disposal of biledar for collection of revenue, suppression of disturbances, maintaining peace and tranquility and expelling the raiders. Ram Chandrapura, Umedpura and Dhanwada were the three important cantonments. Ram Chandrapura is situated about a mile to the east of the city of Kota. Two or three paltans were always kept there for the defence of the city. The paltan of the Tilangas was hardly ever moved away from this place, and similarly the Dhamaka paltan was stationed there. Umedpura is the present Jhalawar. This was the favourite place of Zalim Singh and is situated on the southern border of the Kota state. The fort of Gagron is about a mile and a half from this place. Dhanwada marks the limits of the Chaumahla which Zalim Singh held on mukata system from Holkar till

1. K. S. A. of s. 1855. 30, 21/1.

2. K. S. A. of s. 1820-25 2. 19.

1817, and which later on was ceded to him in appreciation of the services he rendered in the Pindari war, and which, according to his own desire politically expressed, was incorporated in the Kota state. These three contonments had each at least two paltans and sometimes even three.¹ Kota state was divided for administrative purposes into fortynine parganas. At the head quarters of each pargana sufficient troops were kept to maintain the prestige of the Hawalgir, for the miscellaneous duties which he assigned to them from time to time, of which the chief duty was the collection of revenue. The parganas which were contiguous with other states like Udaipur, Indore, Gwalior, Sheopur, Jaipur and Bundi were furnished with specially large troops. This is why several nishans were stationed at Delanpur, Pinchbawa, Barsana and Gagron. The pargana troops consisted of infantry, horse and camel. These troops escorted the hawalgir and other officers of the pargana when they went out for tour.

Cavalry

The cavalry of Zalim Singh was not very large. It consisted of two paigas, the Madhav Paiga and the state paigah. Besides these, from sixty to eighty Sawars were attached to each paltan. The Madhav paltan was so called because it belonged to Madho Singh. His cavalry was considered the best in Rajputana. The officer commanding the Madhav cavalry was Pandit Govind Rao and under him were eight Jamadars, each commanding a squadron of 50 to 200 horse. The total strength of Madhav cavalry was 1400 with about 800 followers. The Jamadar were all mohammadans.³ The state horse consisted of twelve paigas, each under

1. K. S. A. of s. 1865, 67. 21/1

2. K. S. A. of s. 1860. 43, 21/1

3. K. S. A. of s. 1880.

a jamadar and the total number of sawars was 820 with about 300 followers. The ten jamadars were all mohammadans and each paiga was known after the name of its jamadar. The annual budget of the state horse was Rs. 80,343/12/—. The senior most jamadar was Habib Khan who was paid sixty rupees a month. The salary of other jamadars was from Rs. 30/— to 50/—. Every Paiga had a jamadar, a hukkwala, a chabuk sawar, a mashalchi and bhishtes etc.¹ The horses of Madho Singh's cavalry were well bred and excellent and so were those of the Raj Risala. Zalim Singh had an excellent arrangement for horse breeding. The colts were fed on milk at state cost. Each colt was given about twenty four maunds of milk. There was an officer in charge of horse breeding. He was of the rank of hawaldar. The horses were broken and trained by Chabuk sawars and Hukkawala who were attached to every Paiga. The Chabuk sawar trained horses into not only trot and gallop but also in champak, ruhal and kajam which were very much in vogue in those days. The 'cawa' attack and 'takkar', were considered necessary parts of horse training. The Hukkawala habituated a horse to facing fire by having fire works in front of him.

Jinsi or Artillery

There was a large number of big guns in the various parts of the state but a few big guns and a number of small and easily portable guns were always with the troops when they were mobilized. There were over one thousand gunners in the state army, majority of whom were attached to the guns placed on the fort walls at the various places but about three hundred used to move with the troops.² The guns detailed were drawn by bullocks and very often it was a problem how to carry them when the

1. K. S. A. of s. 1866

2. K. S. A.

K. S. A. of s. 1959. 42. 21/1

ground was uneven or hilly or the weather was rainy. The bullocks attached to the Jinsi were specially taken care of, because on them depended the mobility of guns. The officer in charge of guns was called a Daroga. He commanded the gunners and the Lhashkers. Another officer who was called jamadar purchased the stores and disbursed salary, Daroga Jinsi was an officer who held charge of the magazine, and arsenals, bullocks and carriages, and also commanded the Aligols and the Nagas who were invariably attached to Jinsi establishment. This was the organization of the Jinsi also in the camps of the Holkar and the Sindhia.¹

Forts

Forts have a traditional importance in the scheme of defence in India. During the period of anarchy which ensued after the death of Aurangzeb, the forts acquired fresh importance. All the forts in the Kotah state had adequate garrison consisting of infantry, horse, guns, camels etc. Each fort had a good collection of offensive and defensive weapons. Besides there was a good quantity of gun powder, lead and jute necessary for firing guns. A fort served as a place of effective refuge to the residents of surrounding area in times of raids and plunder and was a challenge to the plunderers and pillagers who were neither trained soldiers nor knew the methods of attacking forts. The garrison served as an offensive force also when necessary.

The commandant of the Shahabad fort was ordered by Zalim Singh to purchase the following articles and store them carefully in the store :—

Salt petre.	200 maunds.
Oil.	200 —do—

1. Broughton p. 109.

2. K S. A. of s. 1865. 67. 21/1

Chee.	100	—do—
Jute.	20	—do—
Thread.	29	—do—
Cotton seeds.	200	—do—
Bhang.	10	—do—
Zarda.	2	—do—
Onions.	20	—do—
Haldi.	10	—do—
Salt.	200	—do—
Garlic.	10	—do—
Beetlenuts.	11	—do—
Chillies.	20	—do—
Opium	10	Seers.

A similar letter was addressed to the quiledar of Shergarh who was instructed to collect, besides the things mentioned in the above letter, 48000 maunds of grain for storage in the fort. The old gun powder was to be replaced by new.¹ Similar letters were addressed to the quiledars of other forts.

It was due to keeping the forts well provided and well garrisoned that the large number of raiders who entered the Kota state from the east and the south could not seize a single fort of the state and withdrew after only plunder and pillage of helpless and defenceless villagers. In this connection it may be noted that Zalim Singh seized the fort of Shabbad which belonged to Mahadji Sindhia and the latter made no fuss over it except that he demanded an annual tribute from Zalim Singh in return for the possession of the fort. Daulat Rao Sindhia invested the small fort of Duni (Jaipur State) in 1809 with a large army and thirty big guns. Inside the fort there was not a single gun and the

1. K. S. A. of s. 1802. 57. 3.

2. Broughten. p.

3. Malcolm. Vol. I. P.

garrison consisted of about six hundred men. In spite of this, the siege dragged on for six weeks, the garrison sallied out several times during nights and dragged in some guns of the besiegers.¹ Another interesting example is furnished by the siege of Sheopur by Jean Baptiste, which lasted over one month and in which Jean Bepstiste's family was captured.¹ From these examples Zalim Singh had come to the conclusion that forts were an effective defence against Maratha invasions.

The outer city wall of Kota which rivals the ramparts of Agra Fort were built by Zalim Singh. He made adequate arrangements for its defence. Jagirs and mafis were granted to thirty one persons who were to defend the city with their levies. The number of foot and horse were prescribed in the pattas granted to them.² The thirty-one jagirdars and mafidars were to supply twenty seven horse and 636 foot.³

Gun Foundries

The guns on the fort walls were kept in excellent condition. The old and damaged guns were immediately replaced by new ones, for the manufacture of which there were three foundries. The fragmentary account of the gun foundry at Shergarh shows that in samvat 1851-1855, Dalel Khan was the officer in charge. Under him worked an engineer named Daula Ustad. In three years and six months he manufactured fourteen big guns at the cost of Rs. 2301/-. The guns manufactured were named Kishan top, Kanhiya top, Lakshman top, Baldev top, Ram top etc. Besides these, a number of small and portable guns were also manufactured.¹ At Kota also there was a big gun foundry where about hundred and fifty men under two competent engineers worked permanently. The foundry was called Topkhana, the

1. K. S. A. of s. 1845. 21. 3.

2. Ibid.

3. K. S. A. of s. 1855. 30. 21/1.

building of which still exists. Here the guns were cast and other weapons were manufactured, gun powder was prepared and stored, and the armours were kept. There was a statue of goddess which was ceremoniously worshipped on behalf of the state.¹ On the big guns which are still there on the city wall of Kotah the names of Maharao Umed Singhji, Nanaji Raj Zalim Singhji and Khanji Dalel Khanji are inscribed.

How the army was maintained

As already stated, the annual budget of the army was in the neighbourhood of thirteen lacs which works out at about sixty percent of the total receipts of the state. But this does not in any way discredit Zalim Singh because the main functions of the state during that period were defence and collection of revenue. Zalim Singh's son, Madho Singh was the Pay Master of this big army of about twenty thousand. The salaries and emoluments were disbursed regularly every second month.² The salary of the army was a charge largely on the state treasury and partly on the villages, which had been assigned to topkhana to supplant the expenditure. In 1790, 207 villages were assigned for the maintenance of the garrisons of the forts other than Kota, for which 23 villages were allotted. The total income from 207 villages was Rs. 7,77,102/- and from those allotted to Kota was Rs. 31,284/-.

The forts of Madhukargarh, Shergarh, Gagrion, Suket, Manoharthana, Bakani, and Delanpur were considered of special importance and for the maintenance of each of them a good number of villages were assigned. It was because they were situated in the southern and the eastern parganas of the state or on its borders and were thus exposed to raids by the troops of Holkar or Sindhia, and the Pindari hordes. Zalim Singh pursued

1. Kota State Archives of s. 1866. 4, 3.

2. Kota Rajya Ka Itihas, Vol. II. p.

the policy of kicks and kisses. He kept away the raiders by diplomatic flatteries and at the same time made adequate arrangements for defence.

Another account shows that the revenue of 128 villages amounting to Rs. 1,02,283/-3/9 was assigned to the army to meet part of its expenditure. In these villages there were 396 farms belonging to the military department. The grain produced by these farms was stored in the various forts and from there distributed to the sepoys, its price being adjusted against their salary.¹ Their land revenue and the various other taxes were collected by the military and appropriated to the military budget.²

Recruitment

For the army of twenty thousand it was necessary that recruitment should constantly go on to replace the old, disabled and killed, and for this purpose there were recruiting officers functioning in the different areas of the state. But in times of emergency, brisk recruiting was done in order to enlist recruits from every area. In 1809 there was such an emergency. An order was circularized to the jagirdars of the state to recruit sepoys and sawars. Sixty eight recruiting officers were appointed for the state and twenty for the thikanas. For recruiting the Pindaris, persons of their own class were appointed. They were Mannu, Ramzani, Kayam, Rajan, Taphu and Mani Ram. This sort of vigorous recruitment was done from time to time. No height, or size of chest were prescribed and there was no medical test either. What was necessary was sound health and young age.

Discipline, Uniform, Honours and Privileges etc.

There were arrangements for taking daily attendance of sepoys and sawars in the paltans and paigas, whether stationed

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1856 33. 21/1.

2. Ibid.

at the capital or cantonments or forts or operating in the districts or in Jahazpur area. A register was maintained of the daily conduct and behaviour of all men. Daily reports were forwarded to Kota from the forts, cantonments and other stations and they were read to Zalim Singh. There were strict orders that the sepoy or sawars should not move out of the prescribed limit of the cantonments, except by order or with permission, and punishments were awarded for transgression. This rule was specially enforced in case of paltans on active service in Jahazpur. Deserters were duly dealt with. Immediate information was despatched to the Hawalgirs of the forty nine parganas with descriptive rolls of the deserters to apprehend them. All moveable and immoveable property of such persons was seized.¹

The uniforms to men and officers were supplied by the state and no price was recovered, It consisted of an Angrakhi reaching upto the knees and a pajama and a kamarbandha. The head dress was pagri. Later on it was replaced by sapha. The different paltans had different colours. The colour of the body guards was deep green and that of paltan khas was khaki. The uniform was made of local khadi which was produced in various centres in the state. The uniforms were supplied every year before Dashera. There were contractors who supplied uniform type of Khadi for this purpose and got the uniforms stitched. For winter quilted cotton Angrakhas were supplied. It seems that different styles of Angrakhas were prescribed for the Hindus and Musalmans.¹

Military men who were well spoken of for their good behaviour and conduct were granted exemption from certain

1- (a) K. S. A. of s. 1865, 67 21/1

(b) N. S. A. of s. 1856, 32 21/1

(c) K. S. A. of s. 1860, 48 21/1

2. K. S. A. of s. 1860, 69 Talikon Ka Bhandar

taxes¹ and officers who were killed in action suitably honoured.² and cremated with military honours. The funeral procession consisted of one or more elephants, horses, camels and some Nishans of Paltans according to the status, position as also the action of the deceased officer,³

A small sum was provided in the military budget for chari'y to be disbursed to sadhus and faquirs who would visit the camps and also for ceremonial worships of dieties on certain festivals. There was also a provision for the worship of deities in the various forts. On dashera the guns, arms, the elephants and horses were worshpped, for which there was a separate provision in the budget. The large majority of men in the army were Muslims to whom small gifts were made on muharram and Id. ⁴

Oath and Composition

At the time of enlistment agreements were executed by men and officers both that they would serve the state with loyalty and devotion. This was specially insisted on in case of those who garrisoned the forts. The Hindus took the oath in the name of Ganga and the Muslims in the name of Quran.

The army was composed over-whelmingly of Musalmans but there was a good number of Rajputs, Gujars, Minas, Marathas and Sikhs. There were auxiliary forces of Bhils, Pindaris and Thorees.⁴ The last community included the mogias, sansis and bhangis. No ruler till then had thought of utilizing the services of, or uplifting these suppressed and down-trodden classes. It was Zalim Singh who tried to improve their position

1. Ibid.

2. K, S. A. of s. 1861, 69 3.

3. Ibid.

4. K. S. A. of s, 1860 43 21/1

by giving them honourable employments. The auxiliaries were used for patrol duties in the border parganas, and for harassing and driving away the raiders when they ventured to enter the territory of Kota.

REVENUE

Traditional system of revenue

Before Zalim Singh the revenue administration of Kotah was on traditional lines. The land was partly measured and partly unmeasured and the revenue was collected mostly in kind, and rarely in cash. The entire cultivated land was divided into two categories :—the khalsa and the jagir. The patel and patwari were ancient institutions. The territory of Kota consisted of petty principalities seized from the Gor Rajputs or from the Bhils who had no revenue system. They collected just what they could and the cultivators also kept to themselves as much as they could. Among the first seven rulers of Kota state none possessed any marked administrative ability. They were not assisted by any competent minister either. The revenue collection was therefore, not systematized,

Distribution of villages

The villages were divided into two categories, jagir villages and khalsa villages. The jagirs were given either to the close relations of the rulers, for the support of their families and maintenance of their respectability or to other Rajputs of note for valour and gallantry. A jagir was awarded also in return for military service which consisted of furnishing, when required, a prescribed quota of levy of foot and horse. Mostly the jagirdar himself led his a battle. There were jagirdars of other categories too, namely priests, mahants, family teachers & physicians. The brothers and the cousins of the ruler paid a

small annual amount called 'tanka' as a token of their fealty to the throne, while others made an adequate return in form of military and other service. The khalsa villages had two categories those which were directly administered by the state and those which were held by leading and influential citizens on the mukata system which was either permanent or temporary. The permanent mukata lasted for a long time, sometimes for the life time of the holder. This approximated to the ijara system which the mughals adopted after Aurangzeb's death when the state began to experience difficulties in collecting revenue. The villages were handed over to a local chief or some powerful man who collected the revenue on behalf of the state. He kept to himself the collecting fee which generally increased with the growing weakness of the state, and passed on the balance to the state treasury. Such a man, when the power of the state declined, became master of the villages held. According to Mr. Wills the state of Jaipur, which originally consisted of a few parganas grew to its present size under its astute ruler Sawai Jai Singh, who took from the tottering mughals large areas contiguous to his state on ijara system, and later on when the Mughal power disappeared, incorporated them into his own state territory. The mukata holder deducted 1/3 of the revenue as collection fee and paid the rest in the state treasury. The temporary mukata was just a matter of expediency. Villages were assigned by this method to the creditors for the security and repayment of money advanced to the state. The state took loans from money lenders in times of need and emergency, sometimes at such high rate of interest as twenty four percent per annum. Till the loan was repaid the villages were held practically as jagir by the mukatedar.

The Kuntai Latai and Batai

For every large village or a group of small villages there was a revenue official called Patwari. He kept detailed record of the land held by each individual. Perhaps Todarmal's

system had not been adopted by the small principalities. For the purpose of assessing the revenue the Patwari accompanied by the Patel, the holders of the land and the Balai, visited the fields when the crops had sufficiently come up. In consultation with them, he estimated the probable yield per bigha in maunds. This method of assessment was termed 'Kuntai' and 'Latai'. The Kuntai was the general estimate of the probable yield, and Latai was the average estimate per bigha and fixation of the state share field-wise. After the estimate or Latai if there was a calamity like rust, hailstorm, locusts or raids, revised estimates were undertaken and state share was refixed according to the damage done. In cases of serious calamity the state share was altogether remitted.

The harvesting of the crops, their transport to the Khalyans and the weaning of the grain were watched by the state officials, the patwari, the Sahna and the Balai. The heaps of corns in Khalyans were considered under state custody till its share had been delivered. The Sahna watched the Ingress and egress of persons into and from Khalyan, and at evening the heaps of grains were realed with patches of ash which was stamped and in the morning they were inspected to see that no pilfering took place during the night. But the peasant was permitted to bring as much quantity of grain as was necessary for the daily use of his family. When the grain was quite ready it was measured by a brass pot whose size was prescribed by the state and which was kept in the custody of the Patel. It was of uniform size all over the state and when full contained about a maund of grain. This pot was called 'Sai'. There were smaller measures also-a pai (seer), adhpai (half a seer) and a Chauthia ($\frac{1}{4}$ seer). When the grain had been so measured the state share was demanded. This was fixed at the time of the Kuntai and Latai, at $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{2}{5}$, $\frac{1}{3}$, or $\frac{1}{4}$ of the produce. The state share was received at the Khalyan and stored in the state

ambers. This was called "Batai" or distribution of the produce between the state and the cultivator. An individual cultivator generally possessed more than one piece of land, sometimes as many as twenty, and the Batai was fixed field-wise.

The process of Kuntai, Latai and Batai was repeated in syalu (Kharif) and Unalu (Rabi) everywhere. When the revenue system was reformed by Zalim Singh this process was not changed but made more regular and easily workable by a few changes here and there; Latai the Kuntai and Latai took the form of 'Khasra teep which continued till the year of integration (1947). It consisted of recording the land under cultivation in syalu and Unalu. Along with it the land brought newly under cultivation was also measured and recorded. The Khasra-teep was helpful in preparing agricultural statistics, and had nothing to do with the assessment or collection of revenue.

Cash Payments

The Latai and Batai was applicable of to main crops as Juwar, wheat, gram linseed and pulses, but in case of vegetables and other easily perishable articles this system was not workable. A cash payment was, therefore, roughly fixed, This also depended upon the quality and value of the crops sown like opium, kusuma, betel leaves or vegetables. This method had come down from early Hindu period. Books on Hindu polity mention that the revenue on such articles was paid in cash and not in kind.

Zalim Singh's Revenue Settlement

Zalim Singh was keen to systematise the land revenue. He experimented with the revenue settlement of new villages which he founded. A new village, as soon as it was founded, was put under settlement operation. The land cultivated was measured, the productivity of the various fields was assessed, the land was classified, the rolls of the individual holdings were prepared, and

then the total area brought under cultivation was assessed. A detailed register containing all these items was prepared as also the individual rolls and Khatas.¹ This settlement convinced Zalim Singh that the system would work well and should be applied to all the villages of the state. In 1807 he commenced the revenue settlement of the entire state which then comprized about nine thousand villages. Zalim Singh had no precedents to guide him but he was a man gifted with initiative and originality. Under his masterly guidance the operations were carried out in a very successful manner. The records which have survived will do credit to any trained revenue settlement officer of present times.

Revenue Settlement Board

Zalim Singh constituted in 1807 what may be called a Board of Revenue settlement. It consisted of a subedar and three leading patels and was assisted by three experienced officers¹.

The operations made applicable to all lands

The settlement operations extended not only to Khalsa lands but also to villages held either in jagir or in mukata or udak and included all rent-free lands. Thus a uniform system of land revenue was conceived by the veteran administrator as the only sound system of revenue administration. Two revenue settlements have been made since Zalim Singh's time, the first by Munshi Durga Prasad and the second by Sir Montague Butler, but neither of these operations were extended to the jagirs where Zalim Singh's system still survives. The only change introduced since Zalim Singh's settlement is the enhanced rates of revenue; all other details remaining practically the same.

1. Kota state Archives of s. 1862. 60. 3.

1, K. S. A. of s. 1863-70. 64. 1.

The standard and method of measurement

The first step in the settlement work was the measurement of every piece of land. This was done in two ways; first the entire area of land belonging to a village was measured. It included cultivated, uncultivated and uncultivable land as also pastures and grass lands. The uncultivable land included the inhabited area of the village, rivers, streams, ravines, cremation or burial grounds, wells, baoris etc. The jungle was included in the uncultivated land. The entire area belonging to the village, when measured in bighas, was called a 'Chak' of that village. The chak was then divided into cultivated (Hakat) noncultivated (Padat) and uncultivable (Nalayaq) land. It was the first category which yielded revenue. Each holding was known as Khata, and the holder was called a Khatedar. The unit of measurement was a bigha which was a traditional unit but its size was not rigidly fixed. It differed from pargana to pargana and some times even from village to village and as the collection of revenue was based on latai and batai system, the accurate measurement of land was not considered of very vital importance. Zalim Singh now standardized the size of a bigha and made it applicable to the entire territory, included permanently or temporarily in the Kota state. The measure was a jute rope called dori. Its length was about twenty yards and its weight from eight to twelve seers. The weight was prescribed to fix its approximate thickness so that it could be easily drawn and straightened. A bigha was one dori by one dori.¹ The dori had been in use even earlier than 1807. It was perhaps in vogue from very early times but its size and weight and use varied, not only from time to time or place to place but from ruler to ruler. The dori was drawn by chamars who were paid two annas and three pies as daily wages per head. It had to be strictly straightened and small bushes and other things coming in the way were fallen or removed by a third man who was always

1. K, S, A, of s, 1845, 121, 3,

Village records

1. The measurement and assessment lasted from.....to.
2. Names of persons present during operation.....
3. The area of the chak before the settlement.....
4. The reasons of increase or decrease.....
5. (i) Cultivated.....
 - (ii) Uncultivated.....
 - (iii) Cultivable.....
 - (iv) Uncultivable.....
 - (a) River, tank and vallies.....
 - (b) village, market roads.....
 - and
 - Beers and cremating grounds
 - (c) Hill.
 - (d) Jùngle, pastures, garden.....
 - (e) Muafis or jagir
 - Kinds of muafis and jagirs.....

1. K. S. A, of s. 1864, General instructions regarding revenue settlement,
2. Ibid s. 1856, 32, 21/1,

The records were prepared by the Patwari and inspected by the Chaudhari Qanungo. Zalim Singh was personally interested in the details of the chak of every village, and had them read to him. Once he suspected that the chak of village Khimch was not correct.¹ When he went out in camp, he got the village chak remeasured and found that about 50% of the land was not recorded. It was clearly a case of corruption, a collusion between the settlement officials and the peasants of the village.

Names of fields

For the facility of identification each piece of cultivated land was given a name. Generally the old names were retained but when the name was not sufficiently indicative, a more satisfactory name was given. Fields were named either after their land marks as Khenjara wala; talav-wala, Gailawala etc. or after their sizes as pachchisa, chatttsa, chhabisa etc. A small piece was called tookra, and still smaller tookri, while a big field, say of 50 bighas or about 100 bighas was invariably called a 'Badha'.² The system still continues in the Kota state, but the later settlement introduced numbers also, and, therefore, every cultivable piece of land now bears a number in the village map, but it helps only the revenue officials, the villagers, or as a matter of fact, even the owner of the land knowing hardly anything about it.

Classification of Land

The cultivated land was classified as Goyra, Mal, Kachhra, Doli, Tir, Peevat, Beed, and Dungri. The classification was based on the situation of the land and not on its productivity. For assessment of revenue each class of land was further classified into first class, second class etc.³

1. Ibid, s. 1864,

2. K. S. A. of s. 1860. 64 21/1

3. R. S. A. of s. 1865 General Instructions for revenue settlements,

- (1) Goyara :— The word means the land in immediate vicinity of a village. It was classified as Goyra Awal and Goyra Doyam. Sometimes there was Goyra Soyam (third class) also.
- (2) Mal :—It denotes land beyond Goyra. It is unirrigated and produces either Kharif or Rabi. It was classified as :—(i) Sare Mal (first class), (ii) Utar (inferior) Mal, (ili) Peela (Yellow) mal, (iv) Kanslya (weed covered) Mal, (v) Chhapar (land of thin and uneatable grass) Mal.
- (3) Kachhra is the land surrounded on three sides by a river or rivulet.
- (4) Doli Mal is the cultivable land on a raised ground.
- (5) Tir is the part of the river bed exposed on either side of the stream as the water sinks after October. It was classified into Unchi (high) Tir, and Nichi (Low) Tir.
- (6) Peevat or irrigated land. Ireigation was done from wells, tanks, rivers, rivulets, or sarans.
- (7) Nau taur or newly cultivated land. This was classified as cultizated in the year under review or in the previous year or three years ago, or more than three years ago.
- (8) Beed or preserved grass-land. The beed was classified as (i) Tagri (raised) beed, (ii) Mal beed and (iii) Dungri (hilly) beed.
- (9) Paita or land exposed by the receding waters of a tank or river. Paita was different from Tir. The latter was on either side of a stream while the former is the very

bed of a sandy river, the stream having either disappeared or reduced to a mere streak.

(10) Upreti (hilly) Mal. This was mostly in the pargana of Shahbad, Suket or Mukandara.¹

Rate of Land Revenue

The rates fixed for the ten classes of land mentioned above were as follows :—

1. Goyara	From	Rs. 2/4/— to Rs. 2/8/— per bigha
2. Mal	„	Rs. —/10/— to Rs. 1/10/— „
3. Kachhara	„	Rs. —/12/— to Ra. 1/4/— „
4. Doli	„	Rs. —/12/— to Rs. 1/8/— „
5. Tir	„	Rs. 1/8 /— to Rs. 2/— „
6. Peevat	„	Rs. 2/8 /— to Rs. 5/— „
7. Nautaur	„	Rs. —/1 /— to Rs. —/4/— „
8. Beed	„	Rs. —/4 /— to Rs. —/8/— „
9. Paita	„	Rs. 2/8 /— to Rs 5/—/— „
10. Upreti	„	Rs. —/4 /— to Rs. —/8/— „

The payment was fixed in cash but there were certain villages, specially those situated at large distances from market towns, which had the option of paying the revenue in kind. In case of other villages also there was no strictness. The agricultural produce was accepted in lieu of cash at market rate and stored in the stata ambars which were situated almost in every pargana or forts. From there the commodities were distributed to the state servants, mostly the sepoys and military officers, against their salaries. There were instructions that the revenue should not fall into arrears but it always did, partly due to the high rates of revenue and partly to the reluctance of the peasantry to pay.

1. Kota State Archives of 6, 1865.

Revenue rates

The revenue rates differed not only from region to region but from pargana to pargana and as a matter of fact from field to field in the same village. This shows the high propriety and reasonableness of the methods of assessment of Zalim Singh. Roughly speaking the rates ranged from four annas per bigha to five rupees per bigha, and the average rate was about one rupee. As a result of the settlement, total revenue receipts rose from about 29 lakhs to thirty three lakhs.¹ The language used for the revenue records was the dialect spoken in the Hadauti area. The guiding principles were broadly those of Todar Mal but Zalim Singh did not slavishly follow either the tradition or Todar Mal. However the preamble of Tazkara of every village was written in Todar Mal's style which the following translation will show:—

“Tazkara of measurement of village Chhalina, pargana Jahazpur Sarkar Garh Ranatbhanwar (Ranthambhore) Subho (Subah), Ajmer under the complete rule of Maharaja dhiraj Maharaoji Shri Umed Singhji. From (prepared under the authority of) Faujdar and Senapati Uncle Rajranaji Shri Zalim Singhji and his son Madho Singhji. The village is under the charge of.....and control of Jhala Swarup Singh where the leading citizen is Shah Birdhiram on behalf of whom for the interest and care of the village were appointed Topdar, patel, patwari, militarymen and all the farmers with ‘Sansari (Village Chaukidar), Balai (The revenue peon) who all assembled and supervised the measurement of land by dori at the time of the Kharif crops on Aghan budi 13 Samvat 1865.”

That Ajmer had ceased to be a suba and Ranthambhore was no longer a Sarkar was not considered by Zalim Singh.

1. K. S. A. of S. 1865 64 21/1

The Abstract

The results of the settlement operations were embodied in the year 1814 in an abstract giving the name of parganas, tafas, the number of villages in each, mentioning which of them were old and well settled and which were new, The number of villages in jagir, kata and udak, the number of villages assigned to the military or other departments and those directly under the state for revenue purposes was only two hundred and fifty six out of nine thousand and twenty five. The abstract is indicative of Zalim's grip and grasp of administrative methods and shows that all necessary information regarding the state he was ruling was on the tips of his fingers,

Solicitude for the welfare of the peasants

Zalim Singh took care to see that the peasants flourished and the land revenue was insured. He appointed officers whose duty was to go round and watch the progress of cultivation and timely sowing.¹ Repeated instructions were issued to the pargana officers that the timely ploughing of the fields should be insisted on and that no cultivable land be left unploughed and also that if through the negligence of cultivators the land remained uncultivated they would be held responsible and would have to pay a revenue of Rs. 2/—per bigha for such land.²

Facilities of seeds and khad provided

A timely supply of good and adequate quantity of seeds has ever been a great desideratum for the farmers. Zalim Singh realized the importance of these problems and saw that seeds were supplied in time by the bohras, (money lenders). The

1. K. S. A. of s. 1865. 64. 21/1.

2. K S A of s. 1866. 4. 3. (Hukam Li Taliken)

bohra was an old institution who supplied almost all the needs of the farmers. He made good profit in his business and was the pivot of village economy. Zalim Singh made him responsible for supplying to the farmers necessary money, seeds and grain, and if a bohra was not in a position to do so he used to lend him money from the state treasury and grain from the state Ambar. By doing so he earned interest on what he lent, helped the boharas to carry on their business and provided necessary facilities to the peasants. Some of the Boharas were, of course, fleecers and made disproportionate profits. To such people Zalim Singh was very harsh. The peasants of the village of Kanwas complained to Zalim Singh that the Bohara lent them Juwar at the rate of ten seers per rupee and received it after six months at thirty two seers per rupee, that he charged twenty five rupees as interest on hundred rupees for six months, that no advances were made for paying the land revenue, that no facilities were provided for purchasing the bullocks, that the Boharas were interested in trade and not in helping the peasants, and that as a result of these difficulties the farmers were leaving the village and emigrating to the neighbouring areas. Zalim Singh held enquiry into the allegations which being proved, he expelled the Boharas from the town and provided all facilities to the farmers from the state treasury and Ambars.¹

The state revenue was the first charge on the produce of the land. After it had been paid, the Bohara received his seed and khad interest. Khad was the name for the grain which the Bohara lent to the peasant to eat, mostly during monsoon. The state held itself responsible for the repayment of the money and grain of the Boharas but it was just a legal guarantee. Very often the debts went on piling up. Zalim Singh wanted that the Boharas should not make undue profit, and he interfered in cases of disproportionate gains; but twenty four per cent per annum

1. K. S. A. of s. 1862- 70- 3.

was the usual interest, and ten seers per maund a legitimate badi (increase as interest) on the grain lent for seeds or Khad (grain for eating). The Boharas were expected to lend Khad during monsoon, supply seeds at the proper time and lend money for purchasing bullocks and agricultural implements. In rare cases the money and grain thus lent were permitted to be the first charge on the land produce but, of course, by a special order.¹ When no Bohra was available, money and grain for seeds and domestic consumption were lent directly from the state treasury and Ambars. The grain thus lent was in fact sold and the debtor was required to repay cash at the interest of twelve rupees per cent per annum. This was the beginning of takabi, the only difference being that the rate of interest was rather high but about twenty five per cent of the money thus advanced was always in arrears.²

Grievances redressed

Whenever the peasants made serious charges of misbehaviour or ill-treatment by state officials, commissions of enquiry were immediately set up and, if the charges were proved, the officials were properly dealt with.³ If the complaints were serious, Zalim Singh himself made enquiry. The peasants of Dobra once complained in a body that their crops suffered generally by the movement of troops, that they had to perform a lot of begar because their village was situated on the official high way and that they had no facility of borrowing khad, beej and money,⁴ and that, therefore, the revenue rates of their village should be proportionately lowered. Zalim Singh personally visited the village and removed the grievances and issued parvanas assuring the people that no body would interfere with their pursuit of work or business.⁵

1. K. S. A. of s. 1864 3. 3. (Taliks)

2. K. S. A. of s. 1861. 69. 3.

3. K. S. A. of s. 1862. 70. 2.

4. Ibid.

5. Ibid.

Irrigation

Zalim Singh was very much interested in irrigation and, therefore, encouraged the construction of wells and tanks.¹ The land required for the well and the goon (the slope near the well where the bullocks went up and down while drawing out water with chadas) was given free.² The implements for digging out and removing the earth (pick axes and showels etc) were also supplied free. Either a subsidy in the form of a lump sum was granted or one rupee per day was contributed towards the cost of construction as long as the work lasted.³ An order was proclaimed in the pargana of Suket that the people should construct wells and adequate subsidy would be granted according to state rules.⁴ In the Tehsil of Itawa the state contributed towards the construction of ten wells on an average of four hundred rupees per well.⁵ the peevat rates were not charged. Immediately after a well began to function. The rates were gradually increased till, in course of five years, they came up to the usual rates. While in case of wells situated at the foot of a hill, the rates were not enhanced at all.⁶

Remission of revenue for various calamities

When calamities occurred, remissions were invariably granted. They were not generous but went a long way towards relieving the suffering of the people. Remissions of land revenue were granted for late monsoon, drought, hail storms, frosts, rusts and raids and marches of troops. The remission was proportionate to the extent of calamity. To assess the damages done officers were deputed, and when there was a

1. K. S. A. of s. 1862. 70. 8.

2. Ibid.

3. K. S. A. of s. 1860. 68. 8.

4. K. S. A. of s. 1861. 69. 3.

5. K. S. A. of s. 1862. 70. Talikon ka Bhandar.

6. K. S. A. of s. 1862. 70. 8.

major calamity a commission was appointed and the orders for remission were passed on the report of these commission. The personnel of the commissions did not consist of officials but of experienced and influential patels from the neighbouring villages, In 1803 a general remission of two annas per bigha and of half or full revenue for til crops was granted for late monsoon ¹ The same year in certain areas there was a calamitous drought and, therefore, the entire revenue was remitted.² There was a wide-spread drought in large areas of the state in 1805 and orders were issued that no revenue be charged if the produce was only upto one sai (thirty seers) per bigha, and above that proportionately. ³ The sama year a damage commission was set up to assess the extent of injury done to crops by the hail storms and on the report of the commission 190 peasantss were granted relief to the extent of 1034 maunds of grains. ⁴ For the disturbances and pillage caused by the Sindhias in the pargana of Suket proportionate relief was granted to the farmers. ⁵ The parganas of Soil, Susner Kanad, and Malkhera were granted the remission of land revenue of Rs. 46,000/- for the wide-spread damage done by the march of Mir Khan's troops and plunder perpetrated by them ⁶ Similarly for the damage caused by the march of Colonel Monson's troops and that of Holkar who followed him the agricultural taxes known as bighodi and hal were remitted entirely. ⁷

Promotion of Agriculture

Agriculture was not generally paying at the end of the 18th and beginning of the nineteenth century in Central India and

1. K. S. A. of s. 1860. 68. 8.

2. K. S. A. of s. 1862, 70. 3.

3. K. S. A. of s, 1862. 70. 3.

4. Ibid.

5. K. S. A. of s. 1861. 69. 3

6. K. S. A. of s. 1863-70. 64. 1.

7. K. S. A. of s. 1861 69. 3.

Rajputana due to recurring raids of the Maratha and Pindari troops. Thus driven to despair, they would desert their homeland and leave the fields uncultivated. Zalim Singh offered all reasonable inducements to such people to return, and encouraged immigration of farmers from the bordering areas. They were given all facilities for cultivating the land.¹ Efforts were made that land should not remain uncultivated. Those in possession of it were not allowed to give up cultivation and run away. A Maratha sardar named Tantya, though a friend of Zalim Singh, was strictly dealt with when he stopped cultivation of certain fields² When an uncultivated land was reclaimed, the initial land revenue was as low as six pies per bigha for the first five years, after which it increased gradually till the tenth year and after that the usual rates were charged.³ The concession granted for cultivating the land lying untilled for not more than three years were not however so liberal. The revenue started from one anna, or two annas per bigha and rose to the usual rates in the fourth year.⁴ For cultivating the land used as a cantonment area for long which rendered it very hard and unproductive, generous inducement was offered. The revenue rate started with one anna per bigha and from the fourth year onwards usual rates were charged.⁵ To encourage the Bohras to invest money in cultivating new lands Zalim Singh exempted them from all the agricultural taxes like bighodi, halauti and bab etc.⁶ He encouraged the planting of gardens in big villages and towns and granted

1. K. S. A. of s. 1860. 68. 3.

2. K. S. A. of s. 1864. 3. 3.

3. K. S. A. of s. 1862. 70. 3.

4. K. S. A. of s. 1857 (Mnlki Jhada of 1857, page 345)

5. K. S. A. of s. 1861. 69. 3.

6. Inscription in the Ghughal of Surajpole gale.

land free of cost for the purpose.¹ Between 1818 and 1822 Pandit Ram Karan, who went round to collect material for Tod's Annals and Antiquities of Rajasthan, saw that there were beautiful gardens at a distance of every seven or eight miles, full of trees like mangoes, guavas, and bannana and flower plants mostly roses and hajara.²

Rehabilitation

The peasants were disturbed and uprooted now and then by the raids of the Marathas and the Pindaris, but everything was done by Zalim Singh to resettle or rehabilitate them. His following order is an instance of his solicitude for the welfare of the ryots:—

The Patel, Patwari, the entire peasantry and leading citizens of Kanaphal and Arandkhera are hereby informed as follows:—

Feel reassured and stay in your village. Plough the fields and sow crops. Earn living. The rates granted to you in Samvat 1853 and embodied in the patta shall be observed (by the Government). There shall be no extra harrassment. The two hundred and twenty five bighas of poor land lying uncultivated on the banks of the Sindh and Ahu and beyond the ravines should all be brought under cultivation. You are exempted from bighodi, Jamadari and Rekh in respect of this land and you will not be harrassed on this account. You shall be responsible if even an inch of this land remains uncultivated.³

If a farmer intended to leave his field, he was encouraged to continue cultivation and his legitimate grievances were removed, but if he still fled away his property was confiscated.⁴ Officers

1. K. S. A. of s. 1818-70, 72, 3.

2. Pandit Ram Karan's urdu manuscript Ahaval-i-Raj Kota.

3. K. S. A. of s. 1897.—98 13, 20/1

4. (a) K. S. A. of s. 1869-77, 72, 3.

(b) K. S. A. of s. 1864, 3, 3.

were required to go round in their parganas and see that no farmer was labouring under any unusual difficulty and land was not lying uncultivated. Those in possession of land were threatened that if their land remained uncultivated they would be called upon to pay the land revenue at the rate of rupees two per bigha. Revenue collections were made till the last day of the month of Jeth. The peasants generally used to conceal themselves or flee away to other areas to avoid payment or harrassment. But there were standing orders that no revenue should be demanded in the month of Ashadh or during monsoon and the farmer should be left to carry on cultivation unmolested.¹ Those who fled away were reassured and induced to return and resume cultivation. Simultaneously a threat was extended that if they did not return voluntarily they would be compelled to return.² Deserted villages were resettled and repopulated by offering liberal inducements, namely exemption from various agricultural taxes and reduction of revenue to fifty per cent in certain areas.³ Wood and grass were allowed free for the construction of huts. Leading men were appointed Patels without formality.⁴

The Patel

The Patel was the pivot of the village administration. He was an important link between his village and the Government. He was Government's agent in the village and a representative of the village to the Government. He was appointed by Zalim Singh himself,⁵ generally from the community which constituted the majority in the village population. A moderate-

1. K. S. A. of s. 1869.—77. 72. 3.

2. Pandit Ram Karan's Urdu manuscript Ahwal-i-Raj Kola.

3. Ibid.

4. K. S. A. of s. 1861. 69. 3.

5. K. S. A. of s. 1868—69. 73. 3.

sized village had one Patel but a bigger one had more than one.¹ When there was only one Patel he was known as twenty biswa Patel and where there were two, each was called ten bishwa Patel.² At the time of his appointment, a Patel had to pay nazarana which never exceeded three hundred rupees and mostly it was between two hundred and one hundred. It was paid either in a lump sum or by instalments. But in case of instalments an interest of twelve per cent per annum had to be paid.³ The amount of nazarana was fixed after due and thorough inquiry by a permanent committee consisting of three patels and a seth. They reported every detail to Zalim Singh, on the basis of which the appointment of the Patel was made. The candidate was called at Kota or at Zalim Singh's camp and was asked to execute a bond of good behaviour and accepting the terms and conditions of his service and then the order (Patta) was issued to him. The Pateli was generally hereditary.³ The following was the form of the patta issued to a Patel:-

"Patel Godhu Chhaporda is hereby informed as follows:-

The twenty viswa Pateli of village Banethia in pargana Barod is confirmed on you. You are exempted from nazarana. The following conditions shall be observed. You can cultivate fifty bighas of rent free land-sixteen bighas first class, seventeen bighas second class and seventeen bighas third class. For the land under your four ploughs you will continue to pay the revenue as hitherto. For your remuneration you will collect one anna per bigha on cultivated land. If any land remains

1. K. S. A. of s. 1861. 69. 3.

2. K. S. A. of s. 1868-69. 72. 3.

3. K. S. A. of s. 1868-69. 72. 3.

uncultivated you will have to pay two rupees per bigha (as fine). signed by Patel Dala of Khandi, Shah Nathu of Chardana, Patel Kushal of Kunjer and Patel Uda Taraj, Miti Baisakh sudi Punam's 1870.¹

The patel's remuneration consisted of a levy at the rate of one anna per bigha on the cultivated land in his villager which he was allowed to collect himself. But cases of excessive collections came to the notice of the Government. Zalim Singh, therefore, imposed a tax known as Bab, a barad or bighoti at the rate of one anna and six pies per bigha on the land under cultivation. Out of the tax thus collected one anna per bigha was paid to the patel as his rasum (fee or remuneration) and the remaining half an anna was divided among Chaudhari, Kanungo, Balai and Sansari.² In addition to his rasum the patel was given fifty bighas of rent free land provided it was lying uncultivated and cultivators were not available, Besides, he was granted concession rates of land revenue if he cultivated still more land.

The duties of the patel

The duties of the patel were very comprehensive. He managed the cultivation of all suitable land in his village and induced farmers to remain permanently settled in his village and if they went away induced others to settle there. He also looked after the fruit trees, wells and baoris and the residence of the patwari in the village. He arranged the supply of Khad and Beej for the farmers and made wood for agricultural implements available to them. He represented the grievances of the villages to the Government and tried to get them redressed.³ It was also his duty to organize defence against raids and attacks and also

1. K. S. A. of s. 1868-70. 72. 3.

2. Ibid,

3. K. S. A. of s. 1868-70. 72 3.

to organize efforts for averting locusts. He assisted the Government officers in collecting the revenue and other taxes. He tried to secure Government help for the construction of wells and for the purchase of bullocks and agricultural implements. He conveyed the Government orders to the residents of the village and got them complied with. He kept the Government informed regarding the progress of cultivation. He assisted in the measurement of land and in the process of Kuntai, Latai and Batai where it was in vogue.¹

Honours

When Zalim Singh, either alone or with the Maharao, was in camp, the patels of the surrounding villages used to attend on him and on these occasions he gave as a gift a red turban to every patel. The practice initiated by the regent continued to be observed till about twenty five years ago when the modernized administration discontinued it. To wives and daughters of eminent patels bangles inlaid with gold and silver were given as presents.²

Punishments

Direlection of duty was considered a very serious offence in case of a patel. If the charge was proved, not only was he dismissed from the pateli but, if the offence was very serious, even his entire property was confiscated. If the farmers of a village jointly complained against the Patel, he was sure to be removed from his post.³

CUSTOMES, EXICISE AND OTHER TAXES

Customs an old institution

Customs was an old tax in Hindu kingdoms. It included a

1. K. S. A. of s. 1870. 72. 3.

2. K. S. A. of s. 1873. 12. Ovari Nandgam.

3. K. S. A. of s. 1862. 70. 3.

number of taxes on imports and exports and sale of various articles, and several other tithes namely mapa, ghani, singoti, nikasu, rahgiri, payans, tarbani, badhti, jhali etc. All the taxes came to be known collectively as Zakat during the Muslim rule and the term was adopted also in the Hindu states. Zakat was one of the four taxes sanctioned by the Quran. The receipts under this head were appropriated for the maintenance of religious institutions and establishments and other charities. In the Hindu states major part of income under this head formed part of the general receipts. In 1780 there were hundred and forty three customs posts in the state. They were grouped into four divisions and their total receipts were Rs. 82036/.¹ The posts were situated at important points on trade routes, so that articles of commerce could be easily taxed. Other tithes were locally collected either by a Government official or by a Mapadar or Mukatadar who paid a fixed sum annually or by quarterly or half yearly instalments and collected the tithes himself according to rates prescribed by the state.

Increased income of the department

Zalim Singh did not consider the existing arrangements satisfactory. He had added large areas to the territory of the state, and trade and industry had made considerable progress during his regime. There was, therefore, a greater movement of goods and articles of trade. As Kota was comparatively a place of safety the transport facilities also increased during his times. This necessitated a larger number of custom posts and their groups. The number of Zakats and nakas increased from 143 in 1780 to 450 in 1820 and the total receipts to Rs. 462111 in 1804 and the number of divisions from four to nine.² Probably

1. K. S. A. of s. 1837. 1. Siga Zakat.

2. K. S. A. of s. 1877. 3. 14. Siga Zakat

the nine centres were under the control of one officer but the records do not mention it.

Divisional set up

The customs officer of every division was designated as Hawalgir. If the division was large he was assisted by a Naib Hawalgir. Under them there was a clerical establishment consisting of one Karkun, two or three Badar Nawis and one cashier. A number of tularas (weighers) and one or two batwals (brokers) were attached to the divisions. The Hawalgir enjoyed a status approximating to that of the Hawalgir of a pargana. He was allowed a horse, a rath and a behali for transport. Several menial servants were attached to each division. Their duty was to go round the villages and visit markets and mandis and watch the business transactions and prevent leakage of income from tithes and customs. The salary of the Hawalgirs was not uniform. It differed from place to place according to the amount of work and importance of the head quarters. The Hawalgir of Baran's salary was five hundred rupees per annum. His Naib received one hundred and forty four rupees yearly. The clerks got rupees twelve per month and the menial servants got each three to four rupees per month.¹

How the receipts were appropriated

A part of the receipts of Nandgam (Kota) customs division were appropriated for distribution of daily charity to the Brahmans, which amounted to Rs. 32/8/—. The expenditure on functions of Janmaashatami and Rakhi was a charge on Zakat. Similarly the expenditure at the temple of Kishanaiji Mata of Ramgarh was met from the customs receipt at Baran. An amount of one hundred rupees per month was paid as maintenance allowance to the ladies of Ambaji Ingolia's family. They were living in the fort of Shahabad in 1820 because Ambaji Ingolia had

1. K. S. A. of s. 1877, 3. 14. Siga Zakat.

died in 1809. But the receipts were not spent exclusively on charity or maintenance allowances. The personal establishment of Kanwar Madho Singh and Bapulal (Madan Singh) received their salaries from the Baran customs division. There were similar charges on the income of the other Zakat divisions. After such disbursements the receipts were deposited in the state treasury. The annual income of over five lacs was not exclusive of but inclusive of such disbursements. The main gates of import or export of goods and articles of trade were—Ladhpura ghat, (Ferry), Gangayacha ghat (Ferry) and Rangpur ghat (Ferry) on the Chambal, the Chausla ghat near Shergarh on Kali Sindh and the Mukandara pass in the south. The main routes inside the state were from Shahabad to Kota via Kishen Ganj, Baran, Anta, and Digod, and from Shergarh to Kota via Gagron and Durrah. Goods were taxed while entering or leaving through these gates. The customs duty on various articles at these posts was not uniform. They differed from place to place. The important export duties at Ladhpura ghat were as follows :—

- | | |
|-------------|------------------------------------|
| 1. Grain | at Rs. 1/8/—per manl (12 maunds) |
| 2, Kirana | at Rs. —/1/—per maund |
| 3. Cloth | at Rs. —/2/—per maund |
| 4. Opium | at Rs. —/12/— per maund |
| 5. Elephant | at Rs. 5/— each |
| 6. Horse | at Rs. 1/4/— each |

The rates at Durrah were as follows :—

- | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Grain | at Rs. 1/8/— per mani |
| 2. Kirana | at Rs. —/5/— per maund |
| 3. Cloth | at Rs. —/10/— per maund |
| 4. Opium | at Rs. —/13/.. per maund |
| 5. Elephant | at Rs. 5/— |
| 6. Horse | at Rs. /2/— |

Methods of collection

The customs duty was collected by the Nakedars and Zakatis whose work was supervised by the Hawalgir of the division (Tafa) concerned. Some customs posts and local tithes were given to private individuals on Mukata. By this they obtained the right of collection and appropriation in return for a fixed sum which they paid annually to the state. In areas where regular administration had not yet been set up due either to recurring raids of the Pindaris or the Marathas or to their having been very recently annexed to the state, a rough sort of arrangement was made. The patel of every village was entrusted with the duty of collecting the customs and other tithes if leviable in his village. In the pargana of Manoharthana not a single customs post had been set up, and one hundred and forty nine patels of as many villages in the pargana were ordered to collect the customs and tithes themselves and forward the receipts to the Hawalgir. A small percentage of the collection thus made was given to the patel concerned as collection fee.¹

Jungle

Zalim Singh systematized the administration of the forest department and utilized and preserved the forests as much as he could. The chief forest areas were those of Kota, Barsana and Shahabad. The city of Kota is situated just on the fringe of a forest which extends from Kota to Gagron with small areas of cultivated land interspersing it. The area of Shergarh or Barsana is a thick and rich forest and that of Shahabad also is quite good. These three areas or divisions were divided into thirty sub-divisions, each sub-division being placed under a Biledar and a number of Phairayatis (forest guards). The phairayatis sold wood and bushes with the permission of the Biledar and collected forest taxes. The sub-divisions of Jalawada, Nahargarh, Barsana, Ravansya, Bhumada, Taraj, Harigarh, Mukandra, Madhkargarh, Gagron, Bagher, Mau Madana and Girdharpura were under the

1. K. S. A. of s. 1672, 96, 21/1

charge of one man. Probably there were one or two such officers more. This officer was also designated as Hawalgir janglat from which it appears that the administration of jungle was organized on the same lines as that of the customs, except that in the forests there were sub-divisions while in customs there were not. The staff under the divisional forest officer consisted of the following categories of officers.¹

1. Pairayats and Chaukidars, four or five in each sub-division.
2. Control clerks, who supervised and directed the work of the phairayats and chaukidars.
3. Nakedars at forest posts and ghats (passes).
4. Village phairayats to watch the ordinary village jungles.
5. Chitiwans or Khojaris who traced the foot marks of panthers and tigers to their dens and informed Zalim Singh of their presence,
6. Head Karkun head accountant who prepared the consolidated report of a division.
7. Hasnai, whose duty it was to measure wood while selling it and also to collect the hides of deer, stags etc. who died natural death.

The forests supplied wood for the following requirements:—

1. Construction of huts
2. Thatching of the houses
3. Bullock carts or various descriptions.
4. Ploughs and Kulis of various kinds.
5. Dhanas of wells and their accessories.
6. Furniture like doors, shutters, beds, takhats, chairs, diwans
7. Utensils, commandals, spoons, big cups etc.

1. K. S. A. of S. 1869. 97.

8. Fuel.
9. Ghanis of oilmen

The price of wood required for the above purposes was prescribed. For items number 1 and 2 price was fixed per cart load. For item No. 3 the price was five rupees. For items number 4, 5 and 9 price was not charged at the time of supplying the wood but it was collected in form of jungle tax while collecting the land revenue. The price of fuel was charged per cart load.¹ Some wood specially teak was exported. Barks of bamboos and Dhonkra used for dying cloth were exported to other states.

The forests were classed as Rakhat (Reserved) and Katot (Non-reserved). The reserved forests were meant for preserving wild game which nobody was allowed to shoot. It was reserved exclusively for the Maharao or his sons but Zalim Singh enjoyed the privilege as a special case. The reserved forests were so strictly guarded that no person was permitted to enter them armed with an axe or any other weapon likely to be used for felling a tree. Now and then the old trees were cut down by Government orders and seeds were scattered for growing new trees. The forest did not produce any valuable trees except a small number of mangoes here and there. The other trees of any value were teak, seesum, neem, taindu khair, bambool etc. There were a lot of teak trees in Durrah and Shergarh forests but it was not thick enough to be useful for good furniture. The only fruit trees were mango, tendu, sitaphal, and tamarind.

Woob industry

The forest of Jalawara and Krishan vilas, which, by the way, is a place of great acrchacological interest, containing ruins of beautiful monuments of the ninth and tenth centuries, are specially rich in teak. Zalim Singh, therefore, settled a

number of good carpenters at these towns by giving them suitable subsidies, and organized a sort of wood industry. The carpenters prepared excellent beds, doors, shutters, boxes, kamandals, sinhasans, takhats, chairs, toys, etc. The Jalwara articles were popular and well-known for more than half a century even after the death of Zalim Singh. They used to be exhibited in the annual exhibition at Kota on Dasera festivals, and visitors admired and purchased them, till the Barrielly furniture invaded Kota and paralysed the industry. Only a Zalim Singh could keep it alive.

Bamboo industry was another business and occupation which kept a large number of people, mostly the low caste untouchables like Bhangis and Mogias, profitably occupied. The bamboo wood was used in making baskets, big and small, for domestic and agricultural use, hand fans funnels for sowing and several other articles. The khajoor leaves were used for making mats and asans. These articles were greatly in use in those days when due to perpetual fear of raids it was risky to possess any article of substantial value. The basket industry is still very essential for agriculture.

Forest taxex

The following were the chief forest taxex which were levied in an adhoc manner on the cultivators and others who used forest produce.

Jhar and patra charai

This tax was charged per goat per year from the Gujars or shepherds who owned large herds of goats. It was a light tax, about 4 annas annually per goat, and was charged when the number of goats exceeded five. The goats consumed jhar (bushes) and patras (leaves of babul trees) and hence this name.

Unt (Camel) charai

This was charged like the above tax annually per camel from the Raibaries, who carried on transport work and were considered quite respectable. The rate in 1861 was Rs. 1/8/- per camel.

Bhains (Buffalo) Barar

This was similar to the above two taxes and was charged annually for the grass the buffalos grazed. Its rate differed, according to the availability of grass, but on the average it was twelve annas per buffalo.

Chhola Barar

This was levied on the barbers who used leaves of dhak and bunyan trees for making 'pattals' and 'donas'. It was charged at 12 annas per family annually.

Agari Barar

This was potters' tax charged for using the forest produce as fuel in making bricks and tiles or pots. For each one thousand of bricks, tiles or pots, the tax was two annas.

Khal Rangai Barar

The leather dressers used barks of certain trees in the process of dressing leather. For this they were charged eight annas per khal (hide), and were also required to supply a pair of shoes per year to the Government who passed them on to the 'halis' (ploughers) engaged on state farms.

Ghana Barar

This tax of one rupee per year was collected from the growers of sugar-cane which was crushed into a 'ghana' (crushing stonepit). In addition to this, the peasant presented a 'bheli' (5 seers) of gur to the Government.

Toran Menda Barar

On occasions of marriage forest wood was used for making 'toran' etc. For this a tax of one rupee was charged if fresh wood was taken from the forest.

Income Tax etc.

We have seen that total receipts of land revenue were about thirty two lacs and those of customs about three lacs. The forest could not have given more than one lac. The total income of about thirty six lacs from these three sources could not satisfy Zalim Singh, whose desire for wealth and power was insatiable. This income was not contemptible if Zalim's interests were confined within the limits of the Kota state, but he was a man of soaring ambitions and no treasure was big enough for him. Practically all through his career as the Regent of the Kota state he had his eyes constantly fixed on Mewar, which he wanted to dominate. It was for the fulfilment of this ambition that he wanted more and more money and his only source of income was Kota state. He, therefore, devised a comprehensive scheme of taxation which affected the rich and the poor alike. It was so extensive and exacting that even the beggars were not left untouched. Altogether he collected eighty four taxes, about forty of which were agricultural. Thirty of these taxed were in force up to 1912 when they were incorporated into land revenue by Sir Montague Butler.

The income by these taxes must have been considerable which enabled Zalim to spend large sum on his Mewar schemes. The accounts which he submitted to Colonel Tod in respect of the pargana of Jahazpur which he had held for about twenty years as an assignment from the Maharana of Mewar showed that he had advanced to that ruler large sums of money from time to time which amounted to about seventy lacs. The figure might have been bloated by his clever accountants and his own

manipulations but at least half the amount must have been actually advanced. This must have been derived from the new taxes. The taxes may be classified into three categories, (1) Old taxes, (agricultural and forest taxes and customs duties), (2) income-tax and (3) social taxes.

The old taxes were revised and increased by Zalim Singh. The income tax which fell into about twenty categories was most comprehensive. Every sort of income, however low, was taxed, even the poorest man was not exempted, for instance the agricultural labourers known as halis (ploughers) were taxed at two rupees per year. The income of hali was one ninth of the general produce of a peasant and was never in excess of twenty five maunds of grain, the price of which was about forty rupees. Thus an annual income of even rupees forty was made taxable, but this is not all. The poor Brahmins, Bairagis and Sadhus, and, in fact, the most miserable beggars were forced to contribute their mite to the coffers of Zalim Singh. This was known as Shaddarsban barad. The most ridiculous was the income tax on Sansari and Balai whose annual income did not exceed thirty rupees. The tax levied on the meagre income of Dhobis, and Tailis etc was called Kulhadi Barad. In case of Dhobi it was five annas per year which does not appear excessive. The distillers of liquor were treated leniently. They were taxed each at six annas yearly. There was also a nominal tax when succession ceremony took place. Zalim Singh also imposed a number of social taxes like birth tax, marriage tax, remarriage tax, dowry tax and priest tax. A special tax was imposed if marriage took place outside the Kota state.¹ It is not known what the annual receipts under these heads were but the income must have been

1. (a) K. S. A. of s. 1678. Talik Ahkam ka Basta.
 (b) K. S. A. of s. 1910. Basta Bhandar ki Panadi.
 (c) K. S. A. of s. 1840-46. 13. 20/1

considerable. The taxation was greatly responsible for the widespread unpopularity which Jhala Zalim Singh earned in the second decade of the last century.

POLICE, CRIMES, PUNISHMENTS ETC.

Police, before Zalim Singh

The army was the chief agency for executing Zalim Singh's orders and there was hardly any duty which was not entrusted to it. Its work was short and swift, and, therefore, suited the despotic temperament of Zalim Singh. There was no ruler in that period who would brook any opposition to his will or any delay in the execution of his order. Proper investigation of crimes, and punishment in due proportion to the seriousness of the offence were principles unknown to the rulers of that age. Police did exist, but its functions were roughly the protection of person and property, and prevention of certain crimes without any present day technique of police procedure.

When Zalim Singh became the faujdar of Kota, there were only four Police stations (Kotwali Chabutaras). one each at Kota, Baran, Gagron and Barsana (Shergarh). The records do not indicate that they were divisions. The towns were big and important enough to have a Kotwali in each of them. All other towns and villages had only sansris or village chaukidars who functioned under the Patels. Some big villages and towns had two chaukidars, Rewards or punishments to the sansris were awarded directly by Zalim Singh, and were based either on the complaints of the residents of the village concerned or on the reports of the Hawalgir of the pargana. The sansri could not be easily removed unless there was a serious complaint of direlection of duty or corruption against him. On principle a hereditary sansri was considered administratively desirable.

Police reorganized by Zalim Singh

Zalim Singh thought that the four Police stations were not sufficient. He thought that Kotwali chabutaras were necessary for several other towns also. He, therefore, increased their number to ten and posted a thana each at six more places, Jhalarapatan, Madhukargarh, Manoharthana, Delanpur, Mau and Ramchandrapura. The Kota city was provided with two Kotwals, a number of Sipahis (constables), one trumpeteer (Bankyawala), a few spies (nazarbaz) and a necessary number of Halkaras. The additional kotwali at the capital was established at Rampura (Muhalla), and its establishment consisted of one kotwal, three clerks, five peons, four informers, fifteen spies and one hundred constable.

The salary of a Kotwal was Rs. 20/— p. m. but those posted at Kota were paid Rs. 22/— p. m. Each Kotwal was allowed a horse of full size, which was maintained at state expense. The clerks were paid Rs. 10/— to Rs. 15/— p. m. The constables and the spies were paid Rs. 3/— to Rs. 5/— p. m. but a jamadar's salary was Rs. 8/—. The spies, though attached to the two Kotwalis at the capital, were the personal informers of Zalim Singh and functioned directly under him.

Kotwals' powers and functions

The chief duty of the Kotwal was the protection of the person and property. At that time judicial courts had not been set up. The Police was, therefore, the investigator, prosecutor and also the magistrate. What is now called the municipal work was also his charge. He looked after weights and measures and standards and also controlled the weighers and their helpers; besides, he collected a number of taxes like Kanti barad, (scales tax), Pai Barad (grain measure tax), Panseri Barad (five seer measure tax), Gaz Barad (yard tax, Nata Dharijana Barad (remarriage and irregular marriage

tax), and about ten other taxes. He also collected fines like Chuk taksirs (moral lapse fine) and Peshkashi (fine for unusual profits). He looked after the sanitation of the city and controlled traffic. He tried to arrange relief at the time of epidemic by such measures as were then known. He sold land for construction of houses, prevented unauthorized projections and encroachments and received nazarañā. The land so sold was measured by the mistry or usta of the Police department who prepared a map giving the length, breadth, situation and land marks of the site. The standard of measurement was a 'bath' which was supposed to be nine girah. On the transfer of sale of houses a tax known as chauthan at the rate of forty percent of the price settled was collected by the Kotwal. He also issued the following permits :—

1. Permits to barbers, Dhobis, nurses and Mundchiras to follow their professions.
2. Permit to collect Inch (petty tithe) from temporary or weekly markets.
3. Permit to carry loads on head or back.
4. Permit to carry on trade in boys and girls.

The Kotwal granted pattas for the following :—

1. Permission to adopt a son was granted by the Government on payment of a nazarana which was settled according to the financial position of the adoptive father.
2. Leadership or pateli of a community in the capital or towns. The patel decided community disputes, represented the community in Government affairs and presided over community functions.
3. Transfer of property.

Duties of the clerical establishment and constables

The Kotwal was very often an illiterate man. The clerical staff was meant to help him in all kinds of correspondence, keeping daily record of important events, maintaining a cash book and a few other registers. Zalim Singh did not attach much importance to literary education. He gave preference to practical wisdom and sound common sense coupled with administrative ability. He was guided by this principle in appointing Hawaldars of parganas, jungles and customs as also the Kotwals of important towns. The fact that the number of constables in the two Kotwalis of Kota was two hundred shows Zalim Singh's solicitude for the protection of person and property. The population of Kota in his times must have been not more than thirty thousand, and to maintain an establishment of two hundred sepoyes for the night watch and day work was certainly creditable. By the way, the strength of constables sanctioned for the city of Kota today is only one hundred.

The Nazarbaz and the Shahar Khabris

The spies (Nazarbaz) went round the city watching the various activities and events and reported them to the Kotwal. They might be bringing some useful and also a lot of contemptible stuff to him. It was also their duty to trace stolen property, detect crime, unearth plots, and watch and report irregularities and immoralities among the officials and the public. Whatever information the nazarbazes brought to the Kotwals of the various stations were forwarded to Zalim Singh by them, and a secretary consolidated and collected them, and read them to the Regent who spared some time every day for hearing them.¹ Besides the nazarbazes, Zalim Singh had his own personal spies all over the state who watched the behaviour of the Government servants and the public and sent him daily reports. At Kota, these spies were

1. Tawarikh Ek Riyasat Jhalawar.

called 'Shahar Khabris' or city spies. They were attached to the Police station and, therefore, could watch how the Police work was proceeding. They went about in the city and watched every thing independently, and sent their own reports to Zalim Singh. The secretaries compared the reports of the Kotwals with those of the Shahar khabris and pointed out the discrepancies, if any, to Zalim Singh. This well-organized spy system of Zalim Singh elicited the admiration of Col. Tod who remarked that even air could not enter the territory without informing Zalim Singh.

Aims and punishments

Zalim Singh did not set up any regular judicial courts. At the capital the civil cases were heard and decided by Zalim Singh himself. In the parganas the Panchayats transacted much of the judicial work and the system worked quite well. Big cases were sometimes taken to the Hawalgirs or even to Zalim Singh. The civil suits were decided either by the Hawalgirs or, when they were very big, by Zalim Singh, but the execution of the orders was the Kotwal's duty. In criminal cases the Kotwal figured most prominently. In the parganas where there were no Kotwals, the cases were decided by the hawalgirs or were permitted to be taken to Zalim Singh. Justice was rough and ready. Zalim Singh's will was law. What he considered an offence was an offence, and it was he who decided what adequate punishment was. The orders of punishment were executed by the Kotwals and where there were no Kotwala by the military officers, Jama-dars mostly. There was no written code defining offences and prescribing punishments. Even precedents or conventions were not punctitionously considered. The whims of Zalim Singh decided every thing. It was not unusual to award death sentence for ordinary theft. Amputation of limbs, and tortures of all conceivable kinds were punishments for various offences. Death sentences were ordered to be executed in various brutal and barbarous ways. The common way was to sever the head of the

victim with the stroke of a sword. The other ways were to push the convict down a high precipice, or to blow him off from the mouth of a cannon, or drown him into boiling oil, or tie him to the tail of an elephant and drag him till he died, or bury him neck deep into the ground and break his head into pieces with the hoofs of horses. Such brutalities were common to all the states during that period. The Rajputs, the Marathas and the Muslims as also the Sikhs and Jats inflicted such punishments. Terror and cruelty are at once the strength and weakness of all despots. A few offences like adultery, murder, decoity, theft, burglary and cheating were roughly defined and punishments were prescribed for them.

Faujdari Kacheri

There was an institution known as Faujdari kacheri or criminal court; but it was only an apology for it. The officer was a sort of clerk getting Rs. 15/- per month, and had some Biledars working under him, who received Rs. 7/- or Rs. 8/- per month. A few peons were attached to this court. The powers and jurisdiction of this court were not defined. Any such definition would have restricted the despotism of Zalim Singh. The Faujdari, therefore, dealt with only such cases as automatically came to it, and it might have functioned mostly as a small cause court of those days. All other cases were taken to the Kotwal who heard and punished them, or were taken to Zalim Singh.

Halkara system

Zalim Singh had a number of Halkaras in his service. Halkara is the local pronunciation of Narkara. They were attached to the various Maratha and Pindari camps with which they travelled from place to place, and furnished Zalim Singh with the news of daily events at these courts. They had access to the chiefs and came in easy contact with the sardars and officers.

They communicated the factual news of these camps to Zalim Singh and delivered his messages to the Marathas and the Pindaris. Sometimes important matters of high policy were entrusted to the Halkaras to be communicated to Zalim Singh. For instance Raghuji Bhonsala told the Kota Halkaras that Zalim Singh should not care to ransom Karim Khan Pindari who was then Sindhia's prisoner. The Kota Halkaras were present when Jaswant Rao Holkar's widow implored Zalim Singh to extend his support to the bereaved family saying, 'The old Subedar addressed you as brother, and my deceased husband regarded you as uncle; now this boy Malhar is in your lap.' The Kota Halkaras sent the news of this interview to Kanwar Madho Singh, Zalim Singh's son, at Kota. The Halkaras met Zalim Singh in his camp the same evening and apprised him of the dissensions and differences among the members of the Holkar's family, on which he (Zalim Singh) observed to them, "*This is how kingdoms fall and decay.*" The Halkaras sent to Zalim Singh news from the camps of Sindhia, Holkar, Mir Khan, Karim Khan, Ambaji Inglija, Bapu Sindhia, Dudernaic, Jean Baptiste, Bhonslas and almost all important Rajput states. The news-letters of these Halkaras are very interesting and throw a flood of light on the political, social, religious, and economic conditions of that period. There are several bundles of such news-letters preserved in the Archives of the Kota state. On basis of reciprocity, the chiefs and military leaders and adventurers named above kept their Halkaras posted at Zalim Singh's court.

The Halkaras functioned and moved about in pairs and were known as 'Halkaran ki jor'. Sometimes several pairs of Halkaras were moving up and down between two or more than two courts when some negotiations were going on or when some important event was taking place. They were held in certain esteem at the courts and among the people and were not molested, like other people, during their journey. The Halkaras were paid

generally Rs. 10/- to Rs. 15/- per month. Most of them were senders or carriers of news and not negotiators. Of course, to certain intelligent ones important messages were sometimes entrusted which they transmitted either verbally or in writing to the proper quarters. As they constantly moved about from place to place they had correct knowledge of the details of the various routes and served as good guides.

The Halkaras were much inferior in position to the vakils who were the accredited envoys of one court at another. They had powers to discuss and negotiate on behalf of their masters according to the instructions given to them. The vakils were exchanged between courts which were on friendly terms and all important matters were settled and verified through them. Zalim Singh had his vakils at the courts of the Maratha and the Rajput chiefs, and also in the camp of Mir Khan Pindari. The vakils were accorded a respectable position at every court, and were treated with esteem and consideration like the envoys of the present day. They addressed their masters when the matters under negotiations had taken almost a final shape, and then also sent a messenger with a letter saying, so and so will personally submit the details. Their letters are very few and not helpful in understanding the politics of the period. Some of the vakils of Zalim Singh were very clever and intelligent, but when matters of special importance were in hand, persons of very high status and ability were deputed to represent Zalim Singh, and negotiate on his behalf. Shah Jiwan Ram of Gainta was generally deputed for such missions. But when Metcalfe invited Zalim Singh to send a wakil to Delhi to negotiate terms of treaty with Kota, he deputed Maharaja Sheodan Singh of Gainta for the purpose,

ZALIM SINGH TREATMENT OF OFFICERS, JAGIRDARS AND PEOPLE

Solicitude for the welfare of the people

Zalim Singh believed in a stable and well-settled peasantry. He knew that the land revenue was the mainstay of the state, and it could not be realized until the peasants carried on the profession of cultivation peacefully and uninterruptedly. He was very sorry when the poor people were uprooted from their soil, and their fields and hamlets were destroyed by the fire and sword of the Marathas and the Pindaris. He tried his best to prevent raids, and his efforts were remarkably successful, so much so that the harrassed and molested people of the border areas used to seek shelter in his territory when they were invaded by the hordes of plunderers. However, some raids did take place, now by Sindhia's troops, now by Holkar's auxiliaries and now by the relentless Pindaris, specially in the border parganas. Zalim Singh had organized defence measures, and here and there on the routes entering his territories, he had posted parties of auxiliaries who with the help and support of the local men put up defence when ever the raids were apprehended or actually took place. But not-withstanding all these measures, devastation and destruction of property were inevitable, and considerable physical hardship was unavoidable. On such occasions Zalim Singh invariably came to their succour and afforded timely and much-needed relief.

As soon as he knew, and he generally knew the following day, that a raid had occurred, he issued parwanas of Khatri (reassurance) that all reasonable help and relief would be provided and people should return to their homes and resettle and pursue their usual work. The next thing he did was to hold an enquiry through the local officers into the damage done. On receipt of the report he announced measures of relief, remission

partial or complete of land revenue, or of certain taxes or of both, advance of takavi or loan for purchasing bullocks, rebuilding their dwellings, and securing seeds, and agricultural implements. He then used to take up the matter with the Maratha court concerned, and demanded Paimali or compensation which, if admitted by the Maratha leader, was adjusted against the amount payable as annual tribute to that leader. If raids were made by the Pindaris, then no compensation could be claimed, or would be admitted because no tribute was paid to any Pindari leader. Zalim Singh, in such cases, penalized the thousands of Pindaris who had settled in his territory as peaceful citizens and hundreds of them were serving the state as auxiliaries, and some were enjoying good jagirs. The damage done to his people by the Pindari robbers used to be collected from these Pindari residents. Zalim Singh's arguments were that it should be the duty of the peaceful Pindaris to prevent the pillaging Pindaris from entering the Kota territory, and if they failed they should make good the loss. After a few such cases had occurred Zalim Singh imposed a permanent poll tax on the Pindaris of his state, and the money thus collected was spent on relief measures. Often more money was collected than was spent.

Towards the middle class people Zalim Singh's treatment was quite kindly, but he fleeced them as much as he could. It was because for his ambitious schemes that he wanted more and more money, and also for keeping the Marathas and the Pindaris away. Those who did not implicitly obey him or showed any inclination of practical loyalty to the ruler could not expect any mercy or leniency from him. He punished them harshly, even savagely, and pursued them relentlessly. But the law-abiding and meek persons who paid the numerous taxes cheerfully had nothing to fear from him, because Zalim Singh was not unnecessarily cruel or harsh to anybody and did not like shedding blood if it was not warranted by any political exigency.

Zalim Singh did not let the state officials prosecute the people on any account. Whenever there was an unwarranted interference with the life of the people or an unrecognized tax was collected, or when a powerful person harrassed the weak, Zalim Singh took immediate and effective action and saved the people from official oppression. In the pargana of Manoharthana a Rajput carried away a barber girl who was going to see her mother from a village to another. Zalim Singh ordered the Hawalgir of the pargana to despatch five hundred troops and effect an immediate rescue of the girl. The instructions were that if resistance was offered, the Rajput may be killed. Similar peremptory orders were issued to stop the collection of unauthorized cess in the same pargana. A strict control was exercised on state officers and those found guilty of any corruption were strictly dealt with. The acceptance of illegal gratification was considered a very serious crime and offenders were not only dismissed from service but were deported from the state. In order to prevent combinations of officers, he so arranged that the officials and constables at a Kotwali belonged to different communities. Similar precautions were taken when a fiat was despatched against a person or a group of persons who flouted Zalim Singh's orders and were refractory.

Anxiety for popularity

Like all despots Zalim Singh was anxious to be popular; of course not at the sacrifice of any tax or cess or discipline or implicit obedience, but by doing little kindnesses. When he went out in tour, the village women used to come out with small earthen pots on their heads to receive him, and in their pots he would cause a little money to be dropped. Whenever a present, howsoever humble was offered to him, he used to make a generous return. Wherever he encamped, the Brahmans of the surrounding area used to be fed sumptuously.

As he marched along, he used to distribute charity to the poor and the sadhus both 'Hindus and Muslim'. The disabled and the destitute were given some maintenance allowance. Whenever there was drought, frost, hail storm, locusts or fire or any other calamity, some relief used to be sanctioned invariably.

Social relations with eminent persons

With leading business men, money lenders, priests and even with the Boharas of the villages, Zalim Singh maintained social relations. His attitude was of course, one of social condescension, rather than one of social equality. He treated this class of people with special consideration and accorded them a high status. On the occasion of the marriages of their sons and daughters he allowed them certain facilities and Javazama according to their status. When he celebrated the marriage of his grandson Madan Singh, he invited 305 business men of various places including 52 from Kota. 47 from Mewar, 15 from Sbergarh, 3 from Mangroli, 2 from Sangod and one each from the other parganas of the Kota state. The Boharas from Bundi also were invited. Besides, there were also a good number of priests of various persuasions and travelling merchants dealing in shawls and precious stones. To each one of them he presented a saropav of honour. Even the Patels were not ignored. Altogether hundred and eighteen Patels were invited, of whom fourteen were eminent. They were all given saropavs and treated with honour. Zalim Singh was sincerely solicitous of the welfare of his people. He used to feel much distressed whenever there was an epidemic, particularly Cholera which used to sweep away thousands of victims. The modern preventive measures or remedies were not then known and effective relief to the people was not possible but that he wanted to afford relief was manifested by his propitiation of the various gods and the feeding of young Brahman children which were then popularly considered remedial measure.¹

1. K. S. A. of s. 1870. 11/2. 3.

His treatment of the officers

The most distinguished feature of Zalim Singh's treatment towards the officers and other state servants was that he paid them regularly and punctually which during his times was a very extraordinary achievement. Perhaps Zalim Singh was the best employer in this respect; not only he did not let the salaries of his employees fall into arrears but he rendered them financial aid over and above the salary, on several occasions like marriage, pilgrimage, various religious functions and death. Almost every state servant was granted a subsidy whenever he celebrated the marriage of his son or daughter. When the sacred thread ceremony, or the Khatna in case of Muslims, was performed or whenever a state servant wanted to go on pilgrimage an adequate financial aid was advanced to him. The entries in the state records indicate that a large amount was spent every year on these items.¹ The officers were encouraged to undertake cultivation as a side job and, as an encouragement, were granted a reduction of two annas per bigha in the land revenue. Those who rendered sincere and devoted service were honoured by sarcpavs. Even the Patels were honoured with gift of gold earrings for specially good services. Sons of officers were granted subsidies for starting business. The menial servants and Sipahis were supplied free of cost blankets, ghugis and chakmas during monsoon and winter.² When a state servant resigned service with the permission of the Raj, he was given money for journey and some financial help to settle-down to some work. But those who left service without permission were severely dealt with.³ Respectable Government servants of the status not below that of a biledar or clerk were provided with an escort at state expense whenever their families moved from one place to another, or when they left service and went home.

1. K. S. A. of s. 1836 and 1923, 8. 5.

2. K, S, A, of s. 1874, Ovari Ka Bhandara.

3. K. S. A. of s. 1858—61, 5. 1.

When possible, medical aid also was supplied which consisted of a vaidya deputed for the purpose and the cost of medicine.¹ No such facilities of punctual payment, appreciative rewards, financial subsidies, escorts and medical aid etc. existed anywhere else in any state of Rajputana or of Central India, except of course under Ahalyabai Holkar.

Zalim Singh and Jagirdar

There were two categories of jagirdars. the Desikka jagirdars and Darbarka jagirdars. To the first category belonged those who held jagirs in lieu of service they were required to render to the state. A good number of them were Hadas, but Rajputs of other clans also were good many. Each of them with prescribed strength of horse and foot had to render military service, when called upon to do so. In the second category of jagirdars were included those who were closely related to the Maharao. They were his brothers, cousins, uncles, near or distant, and other close relatives. Zalim Singh created a third category of jagirdars. They were all Jhala Rajputs, mostly those who were closely related to him. The total value of the jagirs thus held was a little over twelve lakhs of which the Jhala Rajputs alone held forty nine villages, altogether worth Rs. 93,740/- per year.² To begin with Zalim Singh possessed a jagir of twenty nine villages which yielded an annual revenue of Rs. 64,000/-³ As his power increased he ceased to care for it, and aimed at becoming the real ruler of Kota, which he actually did become. By the end of the eighteenth century, many new jagirdars had been created. Some of them were Sesodias who came from Mewar and supported Zalim Singh in his secret designs on that territory. Others were the Marathas who acted a sort of liason

1. K. S. A. of s. 1872. Ovarf Ka Khata.

2. K. S. A. of s. 1847—48, 6, 7.

3. Ibid.

officers in his various sorts of negotiations with the Holkar and the Sindhia. Quite a good number there was also of Pindari jagirdars, all very petty, of course, but rendering very useful service in keeping away or averting the Pindari raiders from the borders of the Kota state.

The jagirdars were the most privileged class in the state. Upon their loyal support depended the continued existence of the Hada ruling family and the power of Zalim Singh. The increasing despotism and dictatorship of Zalim Singh and the Maharao's eclipse were not liked by the jagirdars attached personally to the ruler and some of them even resisted the Regent. He, therefore, completely crushed some of them and considerably weakened others so that all resistance was broken, and at least outwardly they all began to obey Zalim Singh. It was to counterbalance the power of the Hada Jagirdars that he created a good many jagirdars of other Rajput clans, as also of several other communities including even the Muslims. The levies which all the jagirdars put together had to supply amounted to 4261 horse and 3035 foot.¹ Besides this, Zalim Singh had a standing army of about fifteen thousand.

The Rajput jagirdars and others were exempted from certain minor taxes like 'Khunchi' (a small quantity of grain taken from every peasant to form a charity fund)² The Rajput farmers had to pay not more than one fourth of the produce of their fields as land revenue to the state,³ while others had to pay generally one third and sometimes even one half. The Rajput peasants, when they settled as cultivators, were given reassurance orders which were renewed from time to time so that they might feel confident about their security and safety. For

1. Kota state Archives of s.

2. K. S. A. of s. 1802. 67. 3.

3. K S A of s. 1802. 67. 3.

bringing a land newly under cultivation the Rajput farmers were granted more generous concessions than other Kisans. A Rajput had to give only one tenth of the produce as land revenue on syalu (Kharif) and five pice per bigha on Unalu (Rabi).¹ The concessions ended after the third or fourth year.

TRADE AND INUSTRY

Though constantly preoccupied with the problems of defence and tributes, Zalim Singh spared time for the promotion of various industries in his territory. It was because he wanted the state to make all round progress. Zalim Singh was in fact essentially a man of peace, and if he were not faced with the ceaseless difficulties of the Maratha and the Pindari raids and then the wave of British conquest and diplomacy, he would have engaged himself more patiently in increasing the prosperity of the state. That inspite of pressure of countless problems he gave his thought to patronizing and organizing the various industries in his territory is evidence of his deep interest in the economic progress of his state.

Textile Industry

When cloth mills had not been introduced and people had to depend upon either the local or the neighbouring products textile industry was a great necessity in every important area. Of course Khadi and some fine sort of other hand-woven cloth was manufactured here and there at several places in the Kota state but Zalim Singh could not be satisfied with this. He wanted that better and different kinds of cloth satisfying all tastes should be made in the Kota state. He, therefore, invited a good number of spinners and weavers from Chanderi, which was then a centre of textile industry, and induced them to settle at Kota by giving them several inducements. They

1. Ibid.

permanently settled at Kota and from them the local weavers learnt the art, and thus better types of cloth began to be prepared in the Kota state. The centres for this were Kota and Patan, The chaik and masuria of Kota are still well known and are used in Kota, Bundi, Jhalawar and are also exported to other places in Rajputana. Zalim Singh also imported skilful dyers from Agra, Chanderi and Burhanpur and granted them several facilities and concessions for settling down at Kota. Under them a number of local boys were trained in the industry and the art of dyeing reached a stage which was not equalled at any other place in Rajputana.¹

Cotton Carpets

Cotton carpets were made at Girdharpura and were much in demand for their beauty and cheapness in Kota and in the neighbouring areas. The production of Khadi was encouraged and improved by large purchases for Government use, The uniforms of the military and police were made of Khadi which was also used for chandanis, curtains, jajams etc. Every year it was purchased in large lots through Shah Hindumal Hansraj, who used to go round and advance money to the weavers against future purchases, The chief centres of Khadi production were Digod, Siswali, Palaitha, Mangrol, and Patan.⁴ The towns of Baran, Gangrad and Barsana were well known centres of cloth printing. The chundari, chhint and pomcha of Baran were very popular till about forty years ago

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1. (a) K. S. A. of s. 1861 3. 1.
 (b) K. S. A. of s. 1861. 2. 1.
 (c) K. S. A. of s. 1872 Overi ka Kbata
 2. K. S. A. of s. 1872. 9, 3.
 3. (a) K. S. A. of s. 1872. Overi ka Khata
 (b) K.S. A. of s. 1874 11. 2.
 4. K. S. A. of s. 1866. 4. 3.

before the advent of the Kota-Bina Railway on which line the town of Baran is situated. But even now the industry has not died down.¹ There was woolen industry at Kanwas, Arandkhera, Sorsan, Rail, Charchauma, Digod, Sultanpur, Manoharthana, Jawai, Harnawada, Sarthal etc. where blankets, ghugis and chakmas were made. The industry was patronized by Zalim Singh, who every alternate year purchased about twenty five thousand pieces of these articles.² Superior woolen cloth like Pattas, shawls and pashminas were supplied by merchants who dealt in these articles and visited Kota every year with a good stock. Zalim Singh made large purchases in order to meet his recurring need of making presents of Saropaos. A shawal was an item in every rich sarapao and, therefore, Zalim Singh used to purchase about two thousand shawls every year.³

At Jahazpur and Loicha there was an iron industry. Zalim Singh extended patronage to the blacksmiths and by providing them better facilities and granting subsidies helped the industry. The blacksmiths of Jahazpur made horse shoes and bridles and those at Loicha made utensils, big and small.³ They also manufactured all kinds of agricultural implements like ploughshares etc. for which there was a large, recurring demand. Daggers, swords and lances and other war weapons were not prepared in Kota but Zalim Singh had gun foundries at Kota and Barana (Shergarh) where gunpowder was also manufactured in large quantity. There were several ustas (mistries) at Kota and important district towns which made matchlocks, daggers and knives, and whetted swords etc. but Kota could not claim to have an

1. K. S. A. of s. 1872 & 1874 Nandgan Li Overi.

2. Kota State Archives of s.

3. Ibid.

4. S. A. of s. 1968. 4. 8.

industry of these things. Efforts were made to organize copper industry at Shahabad, Bakani and Mohi, and Gulab Khan and Saman Khan were entrusted with the work, but it seems that nothing substantial was achieved.¹ There were glass works at Baran. The glass was obtained from the mine of Nahargadh. The articles made were bangles, drinking glasses, globes and lanterns of very crude type.² Zalim Singh was fond of scents and had arrangements at Kota for preparing good scents of rose, Kewra, Chameli and Mogra,³ which he used to present to his political friends. There was a paper industry at Kota in which about one hundred families of kagazis were engaged, and a well-conducted and well-known wood industry at Jalwara.⁴

Zalim Singh's interest in gardening

Zalim Singh took into his service skilful and well-trained gardeners from Delhi, Ajmer, Cawnpore, Lucknow, Agra and Mathura, and with their help improved the gardens of the capital. A number of local chaudharies and malees received training under them, and skilful gardening became traditional. Better seeds and saplings of a large variety of plants were imported from the places where gardens of European style were being planted. Seeds of several vegetables and Kharbujas were imported from Agra and other places, and tried in the Kota soil. The cultivation of adrak was encouraged at Shahabad and seeds of Kaju were imported from Ujjain.⁵ He induced well-to-do citizens to plant gardens of their own and allowed land free of cost or rent for the purpose. In his times a number of gardens belonging to rich citizens sprang

1. K. S. A. of s. 1871. Ovari ka Khata

2. K. S. A. of s. 1872. Overi ks Khata

3. K. S. A. of s. 1872. Overy ko Khata

4. (a) K. S. A. of s. 1874. 11. 2.

5. (b) Ilid 1881. 3. 1.

round the city of Kota, and in the pargana towns. Fruit cultivation, specially of guavas, plaintain, oranges, lemons, mango and pomegranates were encouraged. Tendus, fruit-bearing wild trees was widely cultivated in the forests.

Trade

Zalim Singh was very anxious to promote trade and commerce in the Kota State but his scope was very limited and his resources were very meagre. However, he left nothing undone to organize the economic life of the state and to increase the prosperity of the people. On account of political chaos all round and constant disturbances even inside the state, the greatest hinderance to trade was the want of marketing facilities, and the unsafety of the routes. However, the Kota state was comparatively a safer place, and once the merchandise was inside the territory of Kota, Zalim Singh held himself responsible for its safe transport and allowed several facilities for marketing. The first step he took in this direction was to organize melas (fairs) at several suitable places inside the state for general and special trade. The important melas were those of Umedganj, Nanta, Manoharthana, Sangod and Sitabari, Zalim Singh was personally interested in Nanta and Umedganj. The former was his home and the latter was included in his jagir. In order to avoid criticism the mela of Nanta was called the mela of Shri Braj Nathji and was held for one month in the month of December-January. Merchants were invited from all business centres and notices were sent to hundred and one places of trade announcing the various concessions and facilities in the mela. No customs tax was levied, facilities for stalls were provided, fifteen per cent reduction was allowed in the Radhari tax and efficient arrangements were made for watch and ward. The notices were sent to the following places which will indicate the popularity of the Braj Nathji fair :—Bundi, Selore, Nagore, Nainwa Tonk, Toda,

Jaipur, Malpura (Jaipnr state). Nawashahar, Pali, Kishangarh Merta, Jodhpur, Bikaner, Shahpura, Pratapgarh, Rampura, Bhanpura and Dongarpur, Sitamau Gangrad, Indore Ujjain and Saronj, Agra, Jhansi and Shadara, Chhatarpur, Shivpur, Karauli Narwar, Surat, Ahmedabad, Baroda, Ratlam, Ratlamwad, Burhanpur, Chanderi, Ranod, [Sarangpur, Bhopal, Pidawa, Sundail, Sarwada, Lunawada (Sendhwad) Sagar, Basoda, Biawara, Shahjahanpur, Chaumahla, Sat-Makhla, Naurangabad, Poona, Delhi, Pokhran, Bhilwada, Pachpahad, Bilya, Mandsores, Begun, Bhila, Gautampura (Indore), Sambhar, Naraina, Ajmer, Roop-nagar, Nawan, Parbatsar, Maroth, Barsana, Mangrole, Baran, Barod, Sangod, Palaitha, Antah, Suket, Itawa, Shahabad, Hatoli, Phalodi, Sarwad, Didwana, Runijya, Dhalpat, Garoth, Kotra, Massauli, Malkheda, Raipur. Sillgarh, Zirapur, Machalpur, Amarkote, Dubla, Maheshwar, Bansa, Bahal and Pushkar.

It is clear from this list that a number of businessmen came from outside Rajputana because they were induced by the safety and facilities in the Kota state.

The mela of Umedganj also was held on similar lines and the same concessions and facilities were extended. This mela was held immediately after Diwali and lasted for about a month.¹ All sorts of goods like cloth, utensils, toys, weapons, ornaments, shoes, sticks, furniture, scents, cosmetics, and several kinds of English goods like watches, smoking pipes, soaps, pictures, were exhibited for sale. A space was set apart for business in cattle. Annual cattle fairs were held also at Manoarthana, Sangod and Sitabadi. These fairs were meant specially for sale and purchase of bullocks and horses.²

1. K. S. A. of s. 1823—40 1. 3.

2. K. S. A. of s. 1861. 69 3.

Weekly Markets

Weekly markets were encouraged and organized at all pargana head-quarters and other big towns and villages of the state. This was to provide facilities for sale and purchase by the people of neighbouring areas. The vendors [and the shopkeepers plied good trade and travelled from one hat (market) to another and thus got good business. Zalim Singh granted substantial and attractive concessions to the dealers in various articles. Yet the Government made good income by petty taxes. ¹

Mandis

For trade in particular articles mandis were established at Barsana, Nahargarh and Baran. The last place has been a grain emporium of Rajasthan for the last two centuries and continues to be so even at present. The mandis grew up as a result of very liberal concessions which Zalim Singh announced for the progress of trade. By doing so he encouraged trade, attracted the merchants to these centres and earned a good income by customs duty. Nahargarh and Barsana have ceased to be towns of any importance. They are both practically deserted towns now but Baran is a station on the Kota-Bina Railway line and is situated in the centre of a large wheat producing areas. It is, therefore, a prosperous centre of trade. ²

1. K. S. A. of s. 1845 121. 3.

2. K. S. A. of s. 1802—27. 67. 2.

Facilities for trade

Zalim Singh advanced large loans to encourage the Boharas to carry on trade. These loans were payable by annual instalments at reasonable interest and sometimes without any interest. He induced also the sons of such Boharas to continue to follow their ancestral profession. Now and then announcements were made and published in form of inscriptions on stone pillars reassuring the mercantile community that they would not be subjected to any hardships and difficulties in the pursuit of their trade and that they would not have to pay any thing more than the usual taxes.¹ It was on account of such concessions and facilities that trade and commerce flourished in the Kota state, so much so that in the year 1809 Kashmiri cloth of the value of Rs. 96,008/— was purchased from Amritsar alone and selas (khadi pieces) of thousand of rupees were purchased per year from the dealers of Begun who came to Kota to sell their goods.²

ZALIM SINGH'S BUILDINGS

Nanta Palace

Zalim Singh was not a great builder because he could not afford to be one. His sources were limited and there was a constant pressure of demands on them. However, he had several big buildings to his credit. They are all of utilitarian nature. Being an intensely practical man, he could not indulge in art but the buildings he had raised indicate his practical sense. At Kota he built the Nanta Palace, the Jhala Haveli in the palace campus and a big mansion known as Jhala Haveli near Suraj-

1. (a) K. S. A. of s. 1915—56. 121 3.

(b) K. S. A. of s. 1861. 3. 2.

(c) K. S. A. of s. 1836—1922. 2. 5.

2. K. S. A. of s. 1866, 96. 4. 3.

pole. The Nanta palace was his ancestral residence which has enlarged and improved from time to time. It is a big structure of baronial type surrounded by a high and strong wall. Inside it there are Zanana and male apartments. Some portions of both are tastefully planned and skilfully executed. A few rooms are finished and furnished in the traditional Rajput style, the walls being inlaid with inverted glass cups or beautified with wall paintings of pretty high order. The whole building is an extensive structure which was occupied by Zalim Singh's establishment consisting of about two thousand persons. There is a regular Darbar hall where he held his court, and an extensive court yard where big and formal functions or festivities were organized, and a Nakkar Khana on the gate indicating his position of a de-facto ruler. Besides the portions occupied by his wives, mistresses and concubines and their numerous maid servants, his large male establishment and also by the various offices, there were stables for horses and elephants and barracks for about two hundred foot. It was in this palace that Zalim Singh celebrated the marriage of his daughter Ajab Kanwarbai with the ruler of Bundi which was attended by about a lac of guests. Several ruling chiefs, Rajputs and the Marathas and sardars of eminence were accommodated in this palace. When Colonel Tod stayed as a guest in this palace, it was occupied by Madho Singh and was in its full splendure.

The Jhala Haweli in Garh

The haweli inside the campus of the ruler's palace is a massive building. The walls of the first story are no where less than five feet thick. Its three sides look like fort walls, the windows appearing only in the uppermost storey. It has about eighty rooms and fifty Verandahs but the most remarkable thing about it is that its long passages are all closed to the view from any room. This accords well with the temperament of Zalim Singh whose guiding principle of life was secrecy of

plans and movements. This haweli was built by Zalim Singh in order to be very close to the ruler so that he could watch the movements and activities in the palace. This house proved a source of very great irritation and exasperation to the Maharao, specially during the days of tension after 1820. ¹

Jhala House near Surajpole

It is a vast building, with some portions six stories high, containing three big court-yards and over two hundred rooms and seventy verandahs. The ground floor was all occupied by infantry. The first floor accommodated various offices and the rest was meant for private use. The building is not remarkable for any artistic plan or execution. It is not very massive either. Till recently it accommodated a High School, a boarding house, five judicial courts, more than half a dozen officers with their families, a portion of state archives and a large menial staff, and yet a number of rooms were lying unoccupied, some of them locked ever since Zalim Singh's grandson left it.²

Palace and fort at Jhalawar

The palace and fort built by Zalim Singh at Jhalawar are monuments of his remarkable foresight. All his life he schemed to become the defacto ruler of Kota and his plans succeeded very well. As he advanced in age he contrived that the administration of the state should descend from him to his heirs and successors in perpetuity. In this also he succeeded. But while scheming to dominate Kota, he was simultaneously making provision for a separate principality for himself or his son in case the perpetual administership of Kota did not work well and separation became inevitable. The Chaumahala was evidently his Jaidad,

1. (a) K. S. A. of s. 1858. 3. 1.

(b) K. S. A. of s. 1835—40 Khata Imartan ka.

(c) K. S. A. of s. 1846. 3.

2. Ibid,

conferred on him by the East India Company in return for the distinguished services he had rendered to them in the campaign against the Pindaris. The fort of Shahabad he claimed as his by right of conquest. He had evidently a covetous eye on the Pargana of Jahazpur. As the separation was eventually inevitable, he thought he should have a palace and a fort befitting the status of an independent chief. He, therefore, started constructing a palace at Dhanwara which he named Umedpura after his docile ruler, Maharao Umed Singh. He loved this place because it possesses a good climate, is strategically situated, commanding the route from Malwa to Kota; the strong, historical fort of Gagron, situated at a distance of hardly two miles from it guards it and near about it had sprung, as a result of Zalim Singh's personal interest and efforts, the wellplanned and lovely town of Jhalarapatan which in the eventuality of separation was to serve as his capital. At Umedpura he built a big palace befitting the position of a ruler of a middle sized state in Rajputana and surrounded it by a strong and high wall. Even before it was permanently occupied by his grandson, Rajrana Madan Singh, the town of Patan had the appearance of a capital, and Umedpura five miles from Patan looked like a seat of an independent Rajput ruler. Here he constructed a beautiful tank, planted several exquisite gardens, planned and built beautiful streets and erected noble places of worship. In the remote recesses of his mind Zalim Singh must have looked at it as his distress but comfortable capital.

The city of Jhalarapatan

This city was the creation of Zalim Singh's genius and foresightedness. Though its original splendour and magnificence have considerably declined, it is still a monument of Zalim Singh's greatness. It was visited by Col. Tod at the close of 1820, and may be described in his own immortal words. "The city is nearly a square, surrounded by a substantial wall and

bastions, well-furnished with cannon. The plan is simple, being that of the Indian 'Chawpur' or cross with two main streets intersecting each other at right angles, and many smaller ones running parallel to them. The main street is from south to north. We proceeded through its Bara-bazar until we reached the point of intersection, where, upon a broad terrace, stands a temple of Chatoor bhuja, the four-armed God, at least ninety-feet in height. The marble dome and colonnaded mandup, and the general proportions of the structure attracted my attention.....From thence to the northern gate is a range on either side of houses of a uniform structure, having a great appearance of comfort; and the street, which is a mile long, terminates with a temple, erected by the Regent to his favourite deity, Dwarkanath.....When the Regent took advantage of the times to invite the wealthy of all the surrounding regions to become settlers in this new mart.....he excavated wells, repaired the dam of the old lake, and either built a new or repaired the religious edifices of all sects at the expense of the state; and to secure uniformity and solidity in the new habitations, he advanced to every man who required it half the money necessary for their construction.....Thus in the short space of twenty years, has been raised a city of six thousand comfortable dwellings, with a population of at least twenty-five thousand souls.”¹

The celebrated author further remarks that the internal administration of the city was conducted by a chief magistrate and a council and that Jhalarapatan was “the only town in India, possessing the germs of civil liberty, having the power of framing their own municipal regulations. This is the more remarkable, as the immunities of their commercial charter were granted by the most despotic ruler of India.”² But the greatest boon which

1. (a) Tod, Vol. II, Personal Narrative pp. 1599—1601

(b) K. S. A. of s. 1863—1871. 4. 1.

2. Tod, Vol. II, Personal Narrative p. 1599.

the city of Jhalarapatan enjoyed was Zalim Singh's "leaving the administration of Justice as well as of internal police, entirely in the hands of the municipal authorities, who to their credit, resolved that the fines and forfeitures arising therefrom, instead of becoming a bait for avarice and vexatious interference, should be offerings to the shrine of Dwarkanath".³

Works of defence and public utility

Zalim Singh repaired and fortified quite a good number of small forts which he thought would serve very suitable outposts of self defence. The forts of Shergarh, Gagron, Nahargarh and Shahabad received his special attention. They were not only repaired but properly garrisoned and big guns were mounted on their bastions and walls. The city wall of Kota from Suraj Pole to Ladpura was built by him.¹ Col. Tod says that this wall is as strong as that of the Agra fort. The construction of this wall was carried on under the supervision of Shah Sukhlal, who also supervised the buildings of several temples and repairs of forts as also the construction of a number of tanks. Evidently he was Zalim Singh's Engineer. The Regent built about forty temples, big and small, and dedicated them to various deities Vaishnava, Shaiva and Shakta, which shows the catholicity and liberality of his religious views. There is hardly a pargana in the Kota state in which he did not build a tank. None of his tanks is of any big size and, therefore, none perpetuates his name but Zalim Singh's eye was not on show but on utility. The good many tanks he built served the purpose of water supply to the neighbouring population or provided some irrigation facilities to the cultivators and at the same time brought income to the state. He also built a large number of wells with the same

3. Tod, Vol. II. Personal Narrative pp. 1600—1601.

1. (a) K. S. A. of S. 1863. 5. 1.

(b) Col. Tod. Vol. II. p.

object. From every tank he built 'dhoras' which carried water to the neighbouring fields.²

Zalim Singh built about ten bridges. None of them deserves a detailed description because they are all petty works, and, considered in the light of Modern Engineering, they are insignificant but they are important because they indicate the sound commonsense in Zalim Singh. His aim was to facilitate travelling and transport in all seasons. Such bridges were built at Raontha, Batawada, Baran and several other places. The biggest and the highest bridge is that of Borkhandi. It has apparent defects but it was quite a big venture in 1817.

The guiding principle of Zalim Singh, in undertaking the above constructions, was utility that is immediate gain to the public and state or a practical measure for defence. A few of the temples are quite good, but what he aimed at was a decent place of worship and did not unnecessarily lavish wealth for artistic effect. Zalim Singh was every inch a practical man.

2. (a) K. S. A. of s. 1841. 26. 5.

(b) K. S. A. of s. 1859. 42. 21/1.

(c) K. S. A. of s. 1862. 1.